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Near East & South Asia

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ALGERIA

Moroccan Border: Drug Trafficking Reportedly Up

94AF0230A Algiers LIBERTE in French 27 Jun 94 p 4

[Article by Djafar Amrane: "2,500 Drug Arrests in 1993"—first paragraph is LIBERTE introduction]

[Text] Users keep going to prison, but that does not solve the problem...

At the Hotel El-Aurassi yesterday the Observatory for Human Rights hosted a conference on the drug problem attended by parents of schoolchildren, police and customs officials, and representatives from the Ministries of Justice, Health, Social Protection, and Education. The representative from DGSN [Directorate General of National Security] gave some rather dismaying statistics. In 1992, 6,941 kg of cannabis resin and 27,029 doses of psychotropic drugs were seized; the same year, police made 2,875 arrests, including 136 foreigners, 47 women, and 28 minors. In 1993, 1,436 kg of cannabis resin and 31,365 doses of psychotropics were seized. Last year 2,504 persons were arrested, including 30 women.

In one month, March 1994, no less than 1,626 kg of heroin were found in the jacket lining of an Algerian traveling to Spain.

These are just a few examples of a scourge that is taking on alarming proportions.

The customs representative made another important observation: The quantity of drugs seized in Algeria has quintupled since the border was opened to Morocco, where cannabis is cultivated primarily in the Rif, a mountainous and inaccessible region. He stated that drug trafficking worldwide is a \$500 billion business—equal in volume to the gross national product of a country like France.

He said investigation and enforcement are his agency's two main weapons in the war against drugs. On the investigative side, customs is responsible for surveillance of land borders, Algerian waters out to the 12-mile limit, and vessels entering our ports.

The customs official emphasized that only the "runners" actually get arrested, while the "bigwigs" remain safely out of reach. In that connection, he noted that the seven biggest industrial countries have set up mechanisms to combat laundering of drug money.

Conference speakers said authorities should confiscate assets obtained with drug proceeds. They said this provision should be written into the investment code, to prevent narcotraffickers from laundering their money in Algeria. On the subject of psychotropic substances, participants agreed pharmaceutical dispensaries should be run by licensed pharmacists, which would surely put an end to the selling of Schedule A medications without prescription.

Prevention must begin with campaigns to sensitize children to the problem. But success in this area will depend on close and sustained cooperation of parents, teachers, and associations.

Illegal Trafficking on Border; Security Situation

94AF0228C Algiers LE MATIN in French 26 May 94 p 2

[Article by Manseur Si Mohamed: "Algerian-Moroccan Border: Beneath the Euphoria, Crisis"]

[Text] In Maghnia at 0800, all the Naftal [National Enterprise for Refining and Distributing Petroleum Products] service stations have practically shut down. The problem is that there is no more fuel—a daily occurrence that is far from enviable and even farther from being resolved. There is an indescribable line of vehicles and a hubbub of auto horns mingled with shouts and insults.

Not far away, just beyond the Algerian border post of Akid Lotfi and, of course, the famous Moroccan border post in the locality called Zoudj B'ghel (which translates as "Two Mules," a well-deserved name), stands the new town, the first small Moroccan town before one reaches the Oujda nebula. Known as Sidi Yahia, that new town and Beni Drer constitute a stronghold stretching in every direction along the Algerian-Moroccan border. It is the place where stores of fuel are kept and very jealously guarded: a genuine logistics base where gasoline and fuel oil are stored, ready for sale, in 200-liter drums. Those products are delivered directly, and in the presence of the owner, to small-time vendors (some 50 idlers who are very visible along the departmental road leading to Oujda) in return for a commission of 3 dirhams for every 20 liters sold. The products themselves are Algerian, and they are smuggled into Morocco every day.

Algeria, with its anarchic market economy and unregulated prices based on contradictory principles in combination with absurd price supports, presents a scene of desolation and bitterness from the other side of its western border.

In principle, there are no restrictions on illegal exports across this border, which has become a real sieve for goods and people. The scourge is a major one, and the results are very obvious on the other side of the border, where, almost like a jigsaw puzzle, the various parts suddenly fit together very differently from what one expected.

By Donkey If Necessary

From Saidia to Ain Benimathar and Tendirara, huge quantities of goods are shipped on the backs of donkeys or mules. In the case of Eriad [five food industry enterprises] products and livestock, the perilous trip is simply made by truck.

Nothing has escaped our master sorcerers in the field of big-time smuggling, and the items being bartered are often difficult to stomach: superior-quality semolina and imported flour delivered to our bakers in exchange for bricks of processed kif and other so-called hard drugs; books from the University Publications Office (OPU)

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dealing with subjects in every field, especially medicine, in exchange for bananas and chocolate; chickens traded for shampoo and soap produced under Moroccan license, and so on.

In Port Said, Algerians and Moroccans work hand in hand, often for better or for worse, like an endless tentacle fearing neither God nor man. Tons of essential foodstuffs move through Morocco to be sold in the markets in Oujda, Berkane, and Nador—the "Kif Rif." On the public square in Oujda, the hundreds of merchants who have been "legally" transformed into foreign exchange dealers are a joy to our fellow citizens visiting the place, where the swindling and cheating of Algerian tourists is widespread under the indifferent gaze of the security services. "We are forced to exchange the dirham for your dinar even if the exchange rate for your currency is more than humiliating, but some 'exchange dealers' have received verbal instructions from governorate authorities not to go over 11.00 to 1.00 in terms of the dirham," we were told by an "exchange dealer" who at the same time, wanting perhaps to thumb his nose at us, was packing 200- and 100-dinar banknotes into a box stamped "Enapal" [Algerian National Food Products Enterprise]. The money would probably end up in Ahfir to be used for illegal purposes. How can one not be indignant, and how can one cure those attitudes of ruinous inertia? Simply enumerating these facts proves the existence of something that keeps that system going and has, by the force of things, depersonalized an entire people. Is that not an outrageous attitude, even though it has become normal to trade subsidized products for hashish and processed kif?

As a result, one feels the secret desire for a change that will reduce to a minimum those dangers that have already damaged our personality and our economy, which is based on pseudocalculations of social justice and in which stereotyped language persists. Unfortunately, the whole exercise reminds us that "the reign of Chadli-ism is still omnipresent among us." On the other side of that problematical "border," we are told: "Closing the border is out of the question" because all that investment has been made, and all those people make their living from that trade." [quotation marks as published]

Iranians on the Other Side

The security situation is even more disturbing, although the facts are being downplayed. The priority that has been assigned for some time to the fight against terrorism has left the way clear for a massive intensification of activities harmful to Algeria's national interest. A renewed interest on the part of the Iranian security services has recently been noted across the Moroccan border. There again, the new image of his kingdom that His Majesty Hassan II is trying to project constitutes a proper and effective argument sufficient to worry top Algerian officials. While it is impossible to evaluate the actual number of those agents using Oujda as their fallback base, it is certain that behind those intrigues there is an appreciable increase in activity by "support officers," whose efforts are aimed basically at putting false identities together and at working through

agents recruited in local black marketing circles, which are well-known, and apparently in smuggling circles as well. If those reports are true, it will be very difficult in such circumstances to imagine any hope of transition for an unloved UMA [Arab Maghreb Union].

Recent proof of this was the seizure of automatic weapons and ammunition by our security services—a seemingly glaring indication that other weapons have indeed crossed the border, which is witnessing growing penetration by arms. The only thing is that as was emphasized to us by a member of the Algerian security services who wishes to remain anonymous, "this issue is bound up with the integrity of Algeria's borders"—as though he were telling us that much remains to be done and that there are surely very major interests to be protected on behalf of the well-to-do under the old single-party system. Yesterday's privileges or today's privileges—that is where the real distinction lies. The situation in Algerian society in the 21st century will be controlled by the corporatism of the iniquitous old regime, which still occupies key positions in government. Solely because of them, money is automatically attracting money. They could not care less about the internal problems of Algeria's citizens, provided that the border stays open, no matter what the cost and no matter what happens. It is all tit for tat: the favorite preserve of the Nomenklatura is, of course, the border.

It is a situation that leaves this country's most optimistic citizens perplexed.

Growing Number of Attacks on Foreigners Reported

94P50167A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT
in Arabic 12 Jul 94 pp 1, 4

[Article by Qusayy Salih al-Darwish: "A Bloody Day in Algeria with 14 Killed; Five Russians and Two Yugoslavs Are Among the Dead"]

[Text] Paris—Yesterday Algeria experienced another of the bloody, violent days that have become customary in the daily life of Algerians. Security sources announced that five Russian advisors were killed yesterday morning when their van encountered a group of unknown assailants near Nafaq, located between the Hussein Dey quarter and Oued Ouachaya, east of the capital. The assailants forced the Russians out of the car and shot them to death. This raises the number of Russian citizens who have fallen victim to Algerian violence to twelve.

In another incident, a group of armed assailants attacked the Mouflon D'Or Hotel restaurant yesterday afternoon located near the zoo in the suburbs of the capital. They attacked a Yugoslav delegation eating lunch in the restaurant with some Algerian officials and staff members and opened fire on the group. According to initial information, two Yugoslavs were killed and two Algerian staff members. The number of casualties and the seriousness of injuries sustained is not known. Prior to leaving the scene, the attackers left in front of the hotel a car packed with explosives, which detonated upon the arrival of security and rescue vehicles. The number of victims resulting from the explosion of the vehicle is not known.

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Informed sources stated that a Polish citizen was kidnapped the day before yesterday and another Algerian woman, whose mother is French, was killed and that neither incident was announced. The killing of five policemen in the capital yesterday morning was also not announced, nor was the attack on a police barracks in Chlef at dawn yesterday, which led to the death of two policemen. AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that an Italian citizen was kidnapped several days ago and that the security forces located his abandoned car.

Various sources confirm that the new wave of violence sweeping Algeria is the most violent and bloody since the beginning of the Algerian crisis. These sources also confirm that the death rate exceeds 50 persons per day. Diplomatic circles in the Algerian capital state that President Liamine Zeroual finds himself in a very difficult position because his continuation of the security option to this degree has not produced positive results and has not mitigated the intensity of daily terrorism. These circles fear that President Zeroual may have lost most of the opportunities afforded him to open a serious dialogue and to create a new dynamism in the political arena, provided that he is not embroiled in operations of repression. However, the security campaigns in recent months have resulted in huge numbers of victims, that may exceed those of the past two years.

It remains very difficult for President Zeroual to continue the present policy, since he is not following the advice of the "major capitals," which are calling on him to open a true and comprehensive dialogue with the various elements of the Algerian opposition as the leaders of the eight industrial nations had done in Naples the day before yesterday—in spite of the fact that Algeria's official French press portrayed the eight leaders' call as support for the policy followed by the Algerian regime. Some of Zeroual's friends who today find themselves far from where decisionmaking takes place believe that this fits within the framework of a scheme to push Zeroual towards an extreme position in order to eliminate him.

From another source, (AFP), Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee Mirko Tremaglia announced yesterday before the Italian parliament in statements carried by the Italian news agency [ANSA] that two members of the group that killed seven Italian sailors last Thursday were arrested. The agency stated that Tremaglia announced this following his meeting in Algeria with Algerian Interior Minister Meziane Cherif.

Tremaglia added that their confessions allowed Algerian authorities to identify their accomplices. According to statements made by the Algerian minister, quoted by Tremaglia and carried by ANSA, the members of this group belong to the Salvation Front [FIS].

The Italian official arrived in Algeria last Saturday to "directly determine" the Italian community's situation following the killing of the seven sailors on board a ship moored in a port near Jijel (360 km east of Algiers).

It is reported that Tremaglia met with the Algerian Foreign Minister Mohamed Saleh Dembri last Saturday and then returned to Italy yesterday morning.

Phone Company, Post Office Hit by 'Terrorists'

94AF0226B Algiers LIBERTE in French 10-11 Jun 94 p 3

[Article by Z. Aliou-Salah: "Holdup and Sabotage in El-Harrach—first paragraph is LIBERTE introduction]

[Text] *Nearly 800 million centimes have been stolen from the post office. About 1,600 lines have been put out of service by an explosion at the telephone office.*

El-Harrach was the scene last Wednesday of two criminal attacks about 11 hours apart. The first took place at the post office, which was robbed of nearly 800 million centimes by seven armed individuals "between 20 and 30 years of age."

According to our information, the group, with faces uncovered, burst into the post office at around 1000 and threatened the employees and customers with their weapons. Some of them then entered the strong room, where they gathered up all the loot before fleeing in "two automobiles." According to the same sources, the 800 million centimes included about 150 million centimes in banknotes scheduled for incineration.

Then, at around 2030, there was a bomb attack at the telephone office—"three homemade bombs," according to our sources. The explosion did some damage to the exchange, since 1,600 of its 20,000 lines were destroyed. By yesterday, over 70 percent of those lines had been restored to service by the telephone company's repair crews.

Distribution frames had previously been sabotaged and put out of commission on several occasions at that same location.

Last Monday night, the Hotel El-Andalous in the commune of Les Eucalyptus was also the target of a bomb attack. The bomb had been hidden in the trunk of a vehicle parked in the parking lot. In Tlemcen and Bouira recently, homemade bombs placed on railroad tracks caused the derailment of freight trains.

Algerians surely recall the many bomb scares preceding the odious attack on Houari Boumediene Airport that claimed the lives of nine people, not to mention those it injured and the material damage it caused.

In any event, the attacks in El-Harrach have just reminded us that security measures for the protection of infrastructures of that kind are somewhat defective.

Ighirri Trial: 3rd Algerian Implicated

94AF0228B Algiers LE MATIN in French 12 Jun 94 p 3

[Article by S. Adel: "Third Algerian Implicated?"—first paragraph is LE MATIN introduction]

[Text] (AFP)—*The defense attorney for the two Algerians accused, along with six Moroccan nationals, of smuggling*

arms and ammunition to help the dissolved FIS [Islamic Salvation Front]—their trial has been under way in Rabat since Monday—is asking Moroccan authorities to arrest a third Algerian, Adel Mechat, currently a fugitive, who is said to be involved in the affair.

It should be pointed out that "the eight defendants are appearing before the prosecutor of the Rabat Military Court for 'violations relative to the illegal possession of arms and ammunition and of complicity.'" They are subject to prison sentences of from five to 20 years.

The Algerian Adel Mechat, whose arrest is being called for by the defense, is said by the latter to have been scheduled to receive a sizable shipment of weapons and forward it to Algeria. His identity and his presence in Morocco were mentioned both by the prosecution and by members of the group during their interrogation before the judge. The two Algerians in the group—Hamas Said and Omar Cheblal—told the court that they had met their compatriot Mechat in Kenitra and that he "was able to flee after police raided the home where they were all three meeting." According to those two Algerians, who are denying the charges against them, Mechat told them he was expecting a delivery of "items" to help the dissolved FIS.

According to the defense, Mechat entered Morocco last 12 March at the border post of Nador (in northern Morocco) carrying a false passport bearing the name Ali Meziane.

In a petition to the prosecutor's office of the Rabat Court of Appeal, the defense attorney for the two Algerians is asking that Mechat be arrested and that he be investigated to remove doubts about his "surprise disappearance."

Interrogation of the defendants was concluded last Wednesday evening, and it is expected that the court will reconvene next Monday with the defense making its statement after the prosecution's closing speech. At Wednesday's session, the court rejected a request that the defendants be released on bail. During that same session, the alleged leader of the gang, Moroccan Hassane Ighirri, denied knowing about any arms smuggling to Algeria, but he admitted belonging to a Moroccan opposition movement headquartered in Spain.

The acts of which the defendants are accused date back to last 17 May, when Moroccan authorities announced the arrest of six Moroccan citizens and two Algerian nationals for belonging to an arms smuggling ring working for the former FIS. The defendants were in possession of submachine guns, ammunition, infrared sights, and military clothing. The shipment was seized at the home of Moroccan Ighirri Hassane, 34, the alleged leader of the group. He told Moroccan court authorities that the weapons had been delivered in Spain by another Moroccan who lives in Belgium. According to his statement, he himself got the arsenal across the Spanish-Moroccan border "with no problems" by saying that the weapons had been received from Algerian nationals living in Europe, particularly in Germany, and that they were to be sent on to Algeria by members of the FIS.

Layada's Trial: Weapons Network; Related Cases

94AF0229B Algiers ALGERIE ACTUALITE
in French 27 Jun 94 p 12

[Article by Rachid Drif: "A Certain Abou Adlane"—first paragraph is ALGERIE ACTUALITE introduction]

[Text] Abdelhak Layada denied to judges of the special court last Wednesday that he was one of the leaders of the Islamist armed movement. He was sentenced to death and will soon be tried in connection with a dozen other cases.

Abdelhak Layada, known as "Emir Abou Adlane" from the name of his son, appears to have finally adopted the strategy used by all Islamists facing the special courts on charges of terrorism: that of challenging statements made to the magistrate in charge of examining the case or to police, denying all the charges outright, and blaming attacks on people who have disappeared or are fugitives. The first case concerning this former companion of Allal Mohamed "Leveille"—and involving his extradition from Morocco last summer—was wrapped up within about 24 hours. Capital punishment was decreed against the "emir," who now claims that he was the driver for the Mitidja group and that he did not participate in any crimes or attacks.

The remand order by the special court and the charge by the public prosecutor dealt with the career of Layada, who found himself promoted to "national emir" and head of the Armed Islamic Group (GIA) in the space of 13 months, whereas in 1992, before Allal's death, he was "coordinator" of the Mitidja gang. But no witnesses testified at this first trial, and the court restricted itself to the defendant's previous statements and to the various operations organized by his group, for which nine warrants for his arrest had been issued.

Meetings in Oujda

In March 1993, Layada secretly left Algeria and went to Morocco. He crossed the border by the usual smuggling routes, traveling from Maghnia to Oujda. The reasons for his trip are not fully known, apparently because investigations regarding gangs still active are under way. But at his hearing, Layada said he had met Algerian "Afghans" who were to swear allegiance to him so that he would really become the "national emir"—"El Amir el Watani"—and thus head of the GIA. At the same time, he reportedly received weapons in that Moroccan border town that had been supplied by the European network of the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] through the intermediary of K. Tajouri, a member of the Djazara emergency cell who is now in prison, and the eldest son of Abassi Madani.

Those weapons—Uzi and Scorpio combat submachine-guns, one made in Israel and the other of Czech origin—quickly appeared in use among the former MIA [Armed Islamic Movement] gangs that now belong to the GIA.

They were employed in attacks on the police and in the first assassinations of intellectuals.

Several "deliveries" seem to have been made through the Oujda-Maghnia network. Following "operations" like the one that claimed the life of Kasdi Merbah, dozens of cartridge cases stamped "IMI" (Israeli Military Industries) were found. The Uzis, equipped with silencers and manufactured with no serial numbers, are used mainly by special services. No information was provided during the trial regarding those weapon smuggling channels, and K. Tajouri, who investigators say is an underling, was not called into court to give his version of the facts.

Layada was "contacted" in Oujda by Moroccan customs and transferred to Rabat, where officers of the Royal Armed Forces took charge of his interrogation. He now says that those officers tried to "double" him by offering him sizable logistic support if the GIA would take on opponents of the Moroccan regime as its targets.

Later, according to Layada, he was given a choice: two years in prison for illegal entry into Morocco or extradition to Algeria. He says he chose the latter solution.

On 2 July, after two and a half months of detention, Layada's extradition was ordered by Moroccan authorities. His arrival in Algiers was surrounded by the greatest secrecy and was not announced until several weeks later, the purpose being to exploit to the maximum any information he might provide. At the end of September, he was brought before the public prosecutor in Algiers.

Thirteen Cases

No witnesses and no material evidence were presented at A. Layada's first trial. Thirteen other cases in which he is directly involved are to be tried in the near future by the Algiers Special Court. They include several attacks, holdups, and murders that took place when the "emir" was "coordinator" of the various groups headed by Allal Mohamed.

Important witnesses may be brought forward to testify at that time, and there may be confrontations of witnesses, although the special court did not consider it worthwhile at the first trial to call on people who were in contact with "Abou Adlane."

The Mitidja group consisted of several "khalayate" or autonomous cells, each with its own leader. According to investigations by the security services, the hard core consisted of Allal, Layada, Belbachir, Bentebbiche, Boufera, Zouabri, and Zermane. Only Zermane, who belonged to the majlis echoura [consultative council] established by Allal, is still alive and in prison. Other individuals such as Zeraoui and El-Hani, who are respectively imam and liaison agent in charge of collecting jamaa [group] funds, are also serving time in prison. They may be called on to testify.

Other arrests took place in 1992 during the police operation on E. Allaux Street in Telemly, which resulted in several deaths. Five people who were with Bentebbiche at

the time were jailed, but their names were not announced. Bentebbiche was wounded during the assault but managed to escape. Nearly 250 kg of explosives were seized in the house serving as a hideout for the terrorists. In Belcourt, one member of the group was arrested and three others were killed. They were the survivors of the gang formed by Allal in 1991.

The group was decimated. Dozens of emirs whom Layada knew personally—such as Djaafar El Afghani, Zekioui, and Lahrani—were killed in armed clashes. And he himself said during an interview with EL MOUDJAHID last year that most of the activists he had led were dead.

"Survivors" may exist, but in every trial by the special courts, they have retracted their statements to save their skins, and it is not likely that there are any activists prepared to destroy Layada with damning testimony. The 13 episodes involving the "emir" caused the deaths of 19 people. They all took place in 1992, before "Abou Adlane" proclaimed himself head of the GIA.

At the time, he was using false identification papers: he had a driver's license under the name of Saifi and an identification card under the name of Bouchareb, which he used to cross into Morocco. He was being sought as early as February, but the security services did not learn of the existence of the Mitidja cells and a sizable network until July, when members of the group were arrested at a dam in Medea. It was at that time that the complete organization chart of Allal's gang was pieced together, with Layada's name at the center of the various cells, since he was their coordinator.

Little new information came to light in the first trial, the only exception being that concerning the attack on the Reghaia barracks, during which 12 soldiers were kidnapped. That attack had been kept quiet. The hostages were taken to Mitidja by the terrorists and then released on Layada's orders, whereas other members of the group had planned to execute them. By bringing up that case again, the judges wanted to prove that "Abou Adlane" had decisionmaking power within the armed group and that he was not simply a driver working for the "emirs," as he now claims.

At the time, Rabah Kebir said in an interview published in a French daily that "Chebouti's groups and those of brother Layada will soon be working under a unified command."

Former FIS Cell Members Sentenced

94AF0228F Algiers LE MATIN in French 7 Jun 94 p 3

[Article: "Mild Sentences for Bel Abbes Group"]

[Text] (APS)—Naimi Lakhdar and Belhimer Said, members of a former FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] cell known as Tajassous oua Tahassous (Espionage and Detention), were sentenced by the Oran Special Court yesterday to five and three years in prison, respectively, for formation of an armed gang of terrorists, possession of ammunition, and attacks on the security and authority of the state.

Naimi, a former railroad worker in Sidi Bel Abbas, where he lives, admitted during his hearing that he had been contacted by Belhimer to set up a group consisting of six individuals and had been placed in charge of "security," while Belhimer, the head of the group, was in charge of "health."

According to the remand order, the defendants, who operated out of the Nasr Mosque in the Toba neighborhood of Sidi Bel Abbas, were preparing for armed operations in that city. "Yes, I admit that I received 12 and then seven bullets from a certain Medjadi Lahcene, but it was only for health reasons," Naimi told the presiding judge, because, he added, "my son was sick and I was advised to treat him with powder from Kalashnikov bullets."

The court, openly smiling at that strange explanation, told the defendant to sit down and then began questioning Belhimer. After being confronted with his recorded statements to the examining magistrate, Belhimer immediately collapsed and fainted. The defendant is presumably epileptic. After regaining consciousness, he admitted to being the president of the cell in question, which is a branch of a welfare association located in Algiers, and said he had been put in charge of treating the mentally ill because he was a psychologist.

Committee To Defend Freedom of Expression Formed

94AF0230F Algiers *EL WATAN* in French
24-25 Jun 94 p 7

[Article by F. Metaoui: "Committee To Defend Freedom of Expression Created"]

[Text] A committee to defend freedom of expression has just been created at the instigation of the Algerian Rally of Woman Democrats (RAFD).

This decision was taken at a meeting of citizens and journalists held Thursday at the National Radio Press Club; publishers were invited but did not attend. The committee's mission will be to sensitize public opinion to the pressures applied to journalists by the regime and the continuing threat posed by the armed groups. "For some time, there has been a drift toward return to the one-party system. The government wants a tame press, totally subservient to its whims, and the fundamentalists, for their part, are determined to reduce the journalists to silence," said one RAFD official.

Another speaker noted there is a serious effort afoot to muzzle the press.

In a lengthy analysis, one speaker said the regime has resorted to "repressive" acts because of the influence the press wields. According to this speaker, 1.5 million newspapers are sold every day: "Despite the high rate of illiteracy, Algerians read the press because they have a constant need to be informed." At the international level, he said, even the president of the European Union gets Algerian newspapers on his desk every morning.

Another participant observed that the struggle for freedom of expression is only just beginning, while a member of the RAFD opined that ENTV is not fulfilling its role of informing the people: "But what is happening at ENTV? Who's interests are served by turning this powerful media organ back into a tool of the single party?" she asked. A fellow-member of the women's group spoke about the policy of noncommunication followed by state institutions.

"Journalists are increasingly finding that information is withheld. Getting access to official sources is becoming very difficult," she said.

Discussing the obligation of the press toward society during a period of acute political crisis, several participants laid special emphasis on journalists' obligation to respect professional ethics. "In the absence of a clear legal framework and code of ethics, some journalists have been guilty of excesses," said one of them.

Attacking the questionable practice of some French television stations, one young member of the women's group exhorted intellectuals in exile in Paris to "quit killing" the Djaouts, Yefsahs, Benaoudas, and all the other "martyrs" of the profession with their "interminable speeches about the tragic situation in Algeria."

The new committee, according to one RAFD official, will hold a larger meeting of journalists and citizens. A four-page supplement containing articles by assassinated journalists will also appear in the coming days. It will be published by three national dailies.

Also, the Rally plans to hold a large meeting on 30 June to stage a trial "to pass judgment on the system and on fundamentalism."

In addition, the RAFD is going to file a legal action against Chadli Bendjedid and the two leaders of the dissolved FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] "for crimes against humanity." Concerning the 29 June march announced by the MPR [Movement for the Republic], the RAFD will make public in the near future its decision whether or not to participate. MPR leaders recently received a delegation from the RAFD.

Bread Lines Reappear in Souk Ahras

94AF0226A Algiers *EL WATAN* in French 12 Jun 94 p 4

[Article by A. Abbia: "Souk Ahras: In Search of Bread Lost"—first paragraph is *EL WATAN* introduction]

[Text] The problem of the availability of bread is back among the chief vicissitudes being endured by the citizens. In Souk Ahras, following a period of relatively normal distribution, the chains and the jostling are back in front of the bakeries beginning in the early morning hours.

Souk Ahras—As might have been expected, eyes have turned automatically to Eriad [five food industry enterprises], the sole distributor of bread flour.

As far as that organization is concerned, and judging from the figures on the distribution schedule, there should not be a problem. It was explained to us, documents in hand, that in the governorate of Souk Ahras, nearly 8,600 quintals of flour are delivered to the bakers every month. That is 111 percent of the quantity called for in the distribution schedule.

The some 27 bakeries in the governorate's administrative center alone take from five to nine quintals of flour per day, and if those quantities were used normally and regularly, they should provide more than enough to meet the public's needs. But who can talk about normality nowadays, especially when it is realized that speculation has been turned into a system? Although not absolutely sure about it, many citizens say that flour is being sold on the sly (or under the counter, depending on how you look at it) for 20 dinars [DA] per kilogram.

That represents a substantial profit for speculators, considering that Eriad sells the product to bakers at DA420 per quintal. And incidentally, the resale of loaves of French bread in other stores is proliferating dangerously.

Practically everyone is becoming a door-to-door baker without being bothered by any inspection procedures. For its part, semolina has been in dramatically short supply since the start of the year. This can be seen in the marketplace. But here again, a stream of questions comes to mind once one learns about the quantities being distributed by Eriad. The firm says right off the bat that there was a shortage of imported semolina from December 1993 until March 1994.

That shortage could not be offset by deliveries of local semolina from the semolina factories in Annaba, Bouche-gouf, and El Aouinet (nearly 600 quintals per day).

The situation seems to have improved since April (theoretically, we are tempted to say), thanks to an additional 600 quintals of imported semolina every day. Because the forecasts call for 24,000 quintals per month, we are not far from the established consumption norms per capita—that is, 83 kg of semolina per inhabitant per year. Do these figures mean anything to the creators of shortages and other specialists in black marketeering? Obviously not, considering their ravenous hunger for dinars in hard cash.

Description of Life in Blida

94AF0216A Algiers LIBERTE in French 23 May 94 pp 2-3

[Article by Brahim Ahmed and Cherif Makhoul: "Blida: Between Kabul and Switzerland"; first paragraph is LIBERTE introduction]

[Text] Barely two months ago, the armed groups were imposing their law on the inhabitants of Blida. Today the state has retaken the field. The operations carried out by the terrorists, who are being hunted down, are spectacular but increasingly limited.

At the entrance to Blida, the "entry arch" does not say "Welcome." All it says is "Governorate of Blida." Has

Blida forgotten to be hospitable and friendly to visitors? Is it as cold as all those blocks of concrete that have invaded it without its being able to protest?

It is well-known that concrete is the enemy of agriculture. In the governorate of Blida, that is a painful reality because buildings are being put up at the expense of Algeria's most fertile lands. "Some people do not hesitate to cut down orange trees in order to build their houses.

"Even the local authorities are not careful in choosing sites for their urban development projects. When an APC [People's Communal Assembly] decides to provide building lots, it does not care if hectares of citrus trees are sacrificed to complete the project," we were told by one agricultural engineer. The uncontrolled development of this region has nibbled away at land that was once the site of flourishing tree crops.

Besides that loss of area, the buildings present another danger from the standpoint of security. The reason is that terrorists are squatters in houses that are under construction, which they use as hiding places. "We have wiped out several terrorist groups on building sites, and that fact is no longer a secret to anyone," we were told by a member of the security services.

Blida no longer fills the air with the scent of its flowers. People still remember what last Ramadan was like.

During that month, several citizens were savagely killed. The terrorists in that region need neither a "mahchoucha" [sawed-off shotgun] nor a "zouidja," [a double-barreled shotgun] because they slit their victims' throats. "With my own eyes I have seen two civilians decapitated with metal saws. Even worse, they put the head of one on the body of the other one and vice versa. I will never forget that gruesome scene," said one young police inspector. Newspapers and tobacco shops were banned in the city. A curfew beginning at 1600 was imposed for days. Women were ordered to wear the veil.

They need neither tracts nor posters to get their threats across. They simply issue words of command that are skillfully relayed and amplified by their supporters. The public, manipulated and intimidated, passes on their orders and submits to them: "We were forced to obey their orders because we felt we had been left to our own devices," said one Blida resident.

It should be realized that Blida is divided into two zones: the west, known as Switzerland, and the east, which resembles Kabul.

The reason mentioned by some people is that inside the city one finds only the VOB's [the true Blida natives] with their notables and great families. The latter do everything they can to preserve their city. But "Ouled Yaich"—to mention only that one—is a conglomeration: a medley of residents from different parts of the country who are known by the traditional name of FOB's [those who are not genuine natives of Blida]. Even so, some neighborhoods such as Douiret constitute strongholds from which acts of destruction and assassinations are fomented.

Here in Blida, innocent people have had their throats slit, have been burned, or have been decapitated [text missing] sabers. The [text missing] day of the march by the [text illegible] downtown, one officer barely escaped death, while a police officer fell under the murderous bullets.

Today the city of Blida is under military control. All exits are closed off by permanent roadblocks. Within the city, it is the police who [text missing] members of the security forces. The ordeal seems to be over.

Chrea: Fallback Base

Now that the terrorists have burned down the cable car line that was the pride of Blida, one must follow a winding road with hairpin turns. There are few cars. The road goes through a dense forest of cedar and oak. Four km from Chrea, there is a military roadblock. It is permanent, and soldiers are sheltered behind high sandbag walls. Chrea seems ghostlike and sad. Its fame seems to have been erased by events. All the chalets are empty. No stores are open. The streets are deserted, and one would think there was not a soul anywhere around. "Chrea wound up being a fallback base for the terrorists. Every evening we would hear gunshots. But since the Army came, we have been living in peace."

Ouled-Yaich: Death Road

According to some people, everyone participates in terrorism in one way or another. The person who does not take part in armed actions provides the terrorists with supplies or acts as their informant.

On 19 June Street, now nicknamed "Death Road," anything connected with the state has been destroyed. The telephone lines have been sabotaged. Post offices and bank branches have been held up. Few buildings have escaped the fury of the terrorists. One exception! The city's CEM [college of intermediate studies]. But that is not an accident. The reason is that a military roadblock near the school is manned day and night.

A few days ago, a woman was murdered 200 meters from that roadblock. She was a clairvoyant or "chouafa," and she was "executed" by a terrorist group. And no one dared report that odious crime to the ANP [People's National Army]. She was not discovered until two days later.

On Tuesday 17 May something "new" happened: a bus came down the street in question. It was the first time in a long time that that had happened. The bus was gone over with a fine-tooth comb. The identity of every passenger was checked. But nothing out of the ordinary was found. In Ouled-Yaich, a story was making the rounds of the town. It concerned the trial of a terrorist who was the amir of an armed group. The presiding judge asked him: "How many raka'at [prostrations] are there in the funeral prayer?" He answered with an inordinate number, thus revealing that even the Islam they claim as their inspiration is a unfamiliar to them. Their only motives are hatred and vengeance.

Boufarik Cannot Hide Fear and Anxieties

The country's oldest colonial town is dreary and silent. It abandons its forced reserve only when the subject is its soccer team, the WAB. "We feel secure only when our team is playing home games. That allows us to spend a pleasant afternoon under the watchful eye of the police. And when the WAB wins, we are overjoyed because we are able to forget for one afternoon."

In Boufarik, therefore, the calm is only apparent—an ephemeral illusion. There are no roadblocks, and no security patrols go by. It is said that this town is the very shadow of terrorism.

The orange groves that made this town famous are now hiding places for terrorists. [text missing]. A few burned-out vehicles remain as silent testimony to that work of destruction.

Same Hell Elsewhere

On the road leading to Soumaa, a parking lot had been set on fire. A dozen or so buses were being reduced to ashes. The lot belonged to the Boufarik transportation company. A few meters further on the same road, a factory was being consumed by fire. On the gate and the walls of a CEM not far from that factory, there were graffiti spitting out threats of reprisals and slogans inciting to murder in the name of Islam.

Helwiya and Ghraba, two towns located about 10 km away, are considered dangerous. "The military do not go to those two towns except in large numbers and with lots of equipment." The atmosphere in Chebli is like that in Boufarik, but here the outsider is spotted even more quickly. The town's alleyways seem deserted. The most recent crime was an attack on the headquarters of the APC, a three-story building that was almost destroyed by fire. Perhaps as a sign that life is resuming, repair work on the city hall has just begun.

This commune is an agricultural community. The terrorists have taken advantage of that fact. They have used extortion against several peasants to take away their crops by force.

Meftah is currently under tight surveillance. Certainly since the local cement plant was the target of sabotage. A unit of the Gendarmerie is responsible for guarding the plant. At the entrance to the town, there is an impressive roadblock manned by paratroops. In the town itself, the police and the military inspect vehicles and their occupants. It has been just a few days since the small tobacco retailers made a timid reappearance. But practically all the women and all the girls wear the veil. Meftah has not forgotten Katia.

Larbaa, another town that has become regrettably famous for the lack of security that once prevailed, is now in the hands of the police. The road to Tablat is well-traveled, an indication that the inhabitants have recovered their confidence. But here, too, people refuse to talk. "I don't know anything. For that matter, I am not even from around here."

In Larbaa, distrust is the order of the day. "The citizens are afraid, but they can be sure that we will not allow anyone to disturb their tranquillity," says a soldier stationed at a roadblock.

Roadblocks and Courage

On the highway heading west, a bus skidded off the road and sank into the shoulder. A military truck and jeep arrived. The members of the ANP directed traffic and inquired into possible damage. Fortunately, there was a lot more fear than harm, since the bus was not carrying any passengers.

Actually, the soldiers did not show up because of the accident. They were simply taking their daily "tour."

Every 15 minutes in Blida, a security patrol crisscrosses the city and its environs. That is "the rule." Now that the security forces are in control again, the citizens feel a little more secure.

Not a day passes in this city without the sound of gunfire coming from armed clashes or operations by the security forces. The terrorists have recently been pulling back more and more; they are experiencing nothing but setbacks. The security forces are neutralizing and arresting terrorists and discovering arms caches. Another operation—and not a minor one—has made it possible to "clean up" the city of black marketeers. The area in question served as a rear base and supply center for terrorism. Whether small or large in scale, black market activity is being reduced to nothing. The result is edifying in the extreme. The terrorists can no longer find the complicity they need for carrying out their operations. A recent status report by the combined forces (police, National Gendarmerie, and ANP) mentions dozens of terrorists killed and the recovery of 75 weapons, including 30 Kalashnikovs. But all the soldiers, gendarmes, and police officers we met were unanimous on one point: they alone cannot restore peace. For their gamble to pay off, they consider the help of the citizens not only necessary but essential. "The British police are not the most effective in the world, but they have the good fortune to be helped by a people that is disciplined and above all responsible," said one lieutenant commanding a roadblock. He mentioned the example of a man whose mother had her throat slit by the terrorists but who did not report it to the security forces until 12 hours later. For their part, the police hope that "the citizens will lend a hand in eradicating terrorism." They are looking in vain for a reason for the citizenry's passiveness. In desperation, they have not found any. So they shrug their shoulders. Pending a "generalized awareness," the police and security forces are courageously and heroically doing their duty. Calmly, they even allow themselves the luxury of a saying which is making the rounds by word of mouth and which has quickly become their rallying cry: "Roadblocks and courage."

Annaba: Journalist on Deteriorating Conditions

94AF0229C Algiers ALGERIE ACTUELLE in French
14-20 Jun 94 pp 10-11

[Article by Salima Ait Mohamed: "The City That Is Suffocating"—first paragraph is ALGERIE ACTUELLE introduction]

[Text] "The City of Jujube Frees" is not what it used to be. "Annaba is going to the dogs!" retorts a 60-year-old fisherman who is a native of the region. The weight of its growing population is bursting its ancient walls. But this city's problem is primarily its industry. Annaba is under attack and needs to be rescued.

It could have been an exceptional city. It is open to the Mediterranean the way a flower opens to the morning dew. From its numerous shores, one can climb through the city to picturesque hills. The crest of Edough at Seraidi—at an altitude of some 800 meters—overlooks expanses of blooming vegetation and fertile orchards.

But the sizable pollution caused by factories is one more problem added to the troubles of a growing and increasingly uncontrollable population. Dreary, distressed, and disfigured, Annaba is disintegrating before the indifferent gaze of its temporary residents. Because the city's real inhabitants are fleeing, no longer feeling at home in the dismal setting that the city has become. The aggressiveness and vulgarity of the newcomers, who are in a hurry to be city dwellers but not concerned about deserving that status, are shocking to those who were all once proud to say they lived in Annaba.

A good example was the journalist we ran into at the airport. Heartbroken, Souad Bouzar was leaving Annaba for Paris. She said: "It is impossible to live here anymore. I am leaving." The city no longer recognizes its own people. People are leaving. They do not know how to fix what is wrong. People here give the impression of having been overwhelmed by events. And Annaba itself carries excessiveness within itself. The assassination of President Boudiaf is a wound it cannot heal.

Do Not Touch My City!

Seen from above, Annaba is shrouded in a vast pale haze that makes its places of interest incredibly ugly. The breeze is drawn in by the unbreathable smoke emitted by the factories and industrial complexes set up like the chimneys of a planned curse. The vast greenery no longer suffices to absorb the horrors emitted by the 40 industrial units.

Pollution in Annaba exists on many levels. The water is undrinkable. It is oily and yellowish and makes things even dirtier. Even more serious, it is reportedly contaminated at some levels. Many cases of typhoid were recently reported in the Sid-Amar university residence halls, where those in charge are more interested in investing in the construction of a wall to separate the girls from the boys than in taking care of pipes that were built in an anarchic and suspicious fashion.

Deplorably, Annaba's beaches are practically unusable: vast thick layers of chemical waste and wastewater cover the Bone coast. Some beaches are already closed, examples being Sunrise Beach and Jewish Beach.

The Meboudja, Seybouz, and Boudjemaa Wadis receive sizable quantities of waste mineral and organic oils, heavy metals, phenols, sewage sludge, sulfurous, nitrogenized, fluoridated, and phosphatized waste, and other biological pollutants. The water in the wadis ends up in the sea, which is already receiving 2,000 metric tons of phosphorus gypsum, wastewater, and effluent every day. Considering that most farmers on the Annaba plain get their irrigation water from the wadis in question, there is reason to worry about the quality of agricultural and fishing products from that area.

As for the atmosphere, it is the source of major problems for residents of the communities of Bouni, Boukhadra, Sidi Salem, and Seybouz, who already suffer from abnormally high rates of lung disease.

The consequences of that pollution, which began in the 1970's, have grown so widespread that they are becoming intolerable. For example, one has only to look at the frightening number of asthmatics in the region.

Environmental associations are increasing in number, and scientists are constantly sending distress signals to the authorities to save the city from the evil that is consuming it a little more every day. In that connection, a seminar on the environment and human rights was held last 5 June by the National Observatory of Human Rights, the Ministry of Interior, and the Association for Protecting the Environment and Combating Pollution in Annaba. It was a meeting for the exchange of views and debate on issues related to improvement of the human environment and protection of the natural environment, which is under attack by man and industry. Researchers and associations from several of the country's regions and universities met with public authorities to discuss the need to quickly find solutions to the pollution that is spreading in the region.

In the opinion of Bachtarzi, an epidemiologist who participated in the seminar, unregulated urban growth is the source of many cases of pollution. "In the construction of pipes," he said, "the work has been makeshift." When we met with him, Bachtarzi was preparing to report the results of a study, which he and other scientists had conducted concerning the state of health in the region. Apparently the situation is overwhelming and merits the attention of the authorities. Convinced of the tragedy of the population explosion and its influence on the deterioration, Bachtarzi, who is a physician and a member of the Family Planning Association, has just completed a drive to distribute 2,000 intra-uterine devices.

In the opinion of another participant, attorney Biad, who represents the National Observatory of Human Rights and teaches international law at Annaba University, "the situation is relatively serious, but pollution has existed for about 20 years. We must deal with it as quickly as possible." The attorney told us that at Annaba University,

there are researchers who regularly collect samples of fauna and flora at the Etarf National Park, which is located a few kilometers from the city and possesses bird species that are rare and even unique to the Maghreb.

Biad assured us that an interministerial commission had been set up over a year earlier to study the pollution problem in Annaba. It remains to be seen what purpose that commission actually serves. Sponsoring a seminar is important but not enough, because Annaba is in danger of being wiped out.

Another disturbing phenomenon is the fact that there are 1,204 flooded basements in Annaba, and it costs 10 million centimes to treat a single one of those basements.

Another problem is that 5,600 metric tons of garbage are dumped in the streets every evening. And we know the limitations of local government bodies. In many neighborhoods, tractors are used to haul away that garbage!

Economically, it is impossible to close the factories, especially the two industrial complexes Asmidal and Sider. What would happen to the 18,000 workers employed by Asmidal alone? Hence the complexity of the problem. For its part, the National Bank is pledged to finance a project for safeguarding the environment in Annaba. That will undoubtedly help the city breathe better. Perhaps it will be necessary to make use of all the unemployed cadres specializing in environment and to increase the public's awareness, because there is a lot to be done in that area.

A representative of the Directorate of Education who participated in the seminar could not refrain from telling us an anecdote that is significant, to say the least. In one of the city's neighborhoods following a big cleanup campaign, the authorities laid out a public park. On the occasion of Aid El-Kebir, a dozen sheep devastated the flowers and plants. And the park was wrecked!

Withering Culture

Annaba, Algeria's first polluted city, is also one of its finest tourist sites. Unfortunately, there are very few tourist infrastructures in relation to what the region has to offer in that area. In the city of Annaba, only the Hotel Seybouz (formerly the Plaza) can be recommended. But the city ought to have more than that, if only because it is an important industrial center. Let us say that here, tourism is of no interest to the authorities or the population. The hostility, aggressiveness, and dirt displayed at the airport itself are enough to make more than one tourist flee. "There is a difference between hotel management and tourism," explains Abdelwahab Titali, president of the EGT [Tourism Management Enterprise] for Annaba and the East. "The hotel business is one of the necessary conditions for tourism. But it is not the only one. Tourism is an industry requiring a serious policy. That sector," he said in conclusion, "has been assigned to every ministry at one time or another, the only exceptions being the Ministries of Religious Affairs and of Moudjahidine! Of the 55,000 available beds throughout the territory, only 7,000

are acceptable, whereas Tunisia has 170,000 beds in service. Did you know that it has even happened that private individuals have built hotels and then assigned stars to themselves?" Tourism means a welcoming attitude and the availability of transportation and government services. It also means traditional crafts and cultural activities. All of that is practically nonexistent.

The artists—those who have not fled the deadening state of inaction and insecurity—are scattered. For their part, the journalists all live in hiding. "Everyone is down on our backs!" explains Kamel Edine, a poet and correspondent for ALGER REPUBLICAIN.

The Regional Theater, the Cinematheque, and the famous Palace of Culture, where the great tragedy took place, have been abandoned. Everyone will tell you the same thing. Since the last elections, cultural production has been experiencing a disturbing decline. Many artists and intellectuals have already left the city. Actors who created the ambiance (such as Ben Maarouf, Djamel Ben Hamouda, and the famous curator of the Hippone Museum, Dahmani) are nowhere to be found. The latest report is that Dahmani has been appointed to a post in an international archaeological organization.

In fact, there are few people left who believe that the storm will end. Mrs. Ait-Said is one of them. As the first woman financial controller in the governorate of Annaba, she has watched things deteriorate. "At first, even the women were dynamic. Annaba was really alive. The lack of security has put a stop to all activities," she explains. In that lady's opinion, the struggle has only started. It is to her credit that at least she is reopening the Municipal School of Music, which was closed by the FIS [Islamic Salvation Front] elected officials.

Annaba is turning its back on the sea, just as it is turning its back on its young people, who, for lack of leisure activities and anyone to listen to them, sometimes commit the irreparable. "They are victimized and pushed aside," we were told by Abdelwahab, 27, a painter and correspondent for the daily EL KHABAR. And in the old city, those deprived young people are creating a jungle. If they cannot make a name for themselves in the steadily growing black market, many of them, finding themselves outcasts, end up in the downtown prison. Thanks to his writing and his art, Abdelwahab has escaped the worst. The increasing number of vagrants in the city and the marginalization of its young people are leading to very unfortunate acts of violence.

Even Revolution Concourse is no longer the same. It used to be that at this time of year, one would see families and foreigners enjoying refreshing drinks on bright and colorful cafe terraces on that square. Now the place is exclusively masculine in a sinister way. Wandering wild-eyed vagrants have driven away its cheerfulness and color. The city is slowly going to sleep on its wounds. The evening lights are going out one by one pending the arrival of the dawn.

Security of Oil Companies Assured; New Contracts

94AF0228D Algiers LE MATIN in French 2 Jun 94 p 3

[Article by M. Hadjersi: "Algeria Attracts International Oil Companies"]

[Text] "The objective of Sonatrach [National Company for the Transport and Marketing of Hydrocarbons] is to succeed in exporting 100 billion cubic meters of gas." Considering the difficulties with financing, that appears to be a difficult task for the Algerian oil company. Nearly \$9 billion would be needed for the firm's development plan. But it is still possible to hope, since international oil companies are stepping up their prospecting efforts in Algeria. Each of those efforts is ending in new discoveries, the most recent being that by Sonatrach in cooperation with North America's Anadarko Petroleum Corporation and its partners LASMO [London and Scottish Marine Oil] and Maersk. This week the partnership announced new results achieved in Block 404, which is located in the Erg Oriental southeast of Hassi Messaoud. It should be pointed out that the Anadarko firm is the operating company in Blocks 404, 208, 211, and 245, all of which are located in the Erg Oriental and the Illizi Basin. And as though in response to certain foreign media that have recently been raging against Sonatrach and its general manager, Abdelhak Bouhafs, Bouhafs has just made a favorable appraisal of the commitments by international oil companies operating in Algeria.

In an interview granted to the London newspaper EL HAYAT, the head of Sonatrach said that "the companies operating in Algeria, such as Mobil, which signed a contract last year, are already at work in the areas assigned to them and have even replaced Sonatrach's activities, having been encouraged to do so by the promising discoveries that have been made." He said: "Those prospecting companies decided to continue their efforts after we assured them of sufficient security." Bouhafs added: "We have confidence in them because they have already proved themselves around the world by working under difficult conditions, something that has given them solid experience in the field of security," and he concluded by saying, on that subject, that those companies had enabled Algeria to acquire great experience in the field of security." Concerning the construction companies, the head of Sonatrach told EL HAYAT that Picktel is still at work, Kellogg is active in Arzew and Skikda, and Sofragaz [expansion not given] is working in Biskra. For its part, Picktel is scheduled to begin work on the Maghreb-Europe gas pipeline in the near future. For its part, the Ocko firm has already begun its activities, and drilling is expected to begin shortly.

Concerning Sonatrach's invitations to tender, the firm has received responses, according to Bouhafs. Algeria currently has 10 fields that it must develop. "In that connection, contracts have been signed to carry out those projects in five fields with Japanese and European companies, and

work is already underway," Bouhafs said, noting in conclusion that his company had signed a contract for the construction of a gas pipeline that will collect all the liquid gas from the various fields.

That project is reportedly under way with the participation of Algerian companies working through a group of French firms.

Sharp Increase in Fruit, Vegetable Prices Noted

94AF0230G Algiers LIBERTE in French 29 Jun 94 p 9

[Article: "Fruit and Vegetable Prices Soar"]

[Text] A steep hike in prices of fruits and vegetables has been observed since last Wednesday in markets in the city of Tizi Ouzou, and was still continuing as of this Tuesday, it was learned. The biggest jumps were in tomatoes, pimento, and beans—the commodity whose price is most important to consumers because of its seasonal character and the large amounts consumed at this time of year.

Retailers were selling tomatoes for 40-45 Algerian dinars [DA] per kg, pimento for DA48-52, and beans for DA30-45.

Courgette at DA35, lettuce at DA22-30, and onions at DA15 have all followed the same upward price curve. Fruits are inaccessible for modest budgets, with peaches selling for DA60-120 per kg (depending on quality and freshness of the produce), plums for DA60-80, and apricots for DA60-80.

Potatoes, already quite expensive, were the only product not affected by the spiral, remaining stable at prices oscillating between DA28-30 dinars. First hit by climbing prices was the Tizi Ouzou wholesale market, the place where merchants in the region go to get provisions.

But wholesale prices (DA38 for tomatoes, DA40 for pimento, DA28 for beans), though increasing on balance and thus necessarily affecting retail prices—are not the only reason for the inflation. In fact, it has been observed that higher profit margins are being gouged. Beans purchased at DA28 wholesale were being offered at DA45-50 by vendors 200-300 meters down the road.

Certain merchants—commonly known as "dispensers," they have a reputation for high prices but also good quality—were selling produce at prices much higher than those charged at downtown retail markets (1 November Square) or the new city (opposite the shopping centers). One vendor explained the price rise in terms of increasing demand put on wholesalers in recent days by retailers coming from Bejaia and Setif. Another blamed the situation on the recent cool weather, which he said may have disinclined producers to market more produce.

Some merchants who have noted signs of softness in the market predict a gradual moderating trend in prices in coming days, reinforced by the risk that unsold produce might wilt.

EGYPT

Dean Appointment Law Stirs University Debate

94LD0065A Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 2 Jun 94 p 3

[Article by Sami Abu-al-Izz: "Opposition in Assembly Rejects Law Transforming Professors Into Officials and Colleges Into Koranic Schools"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] The change in the Universities Regulation Law aroused a lot of argument and discussions among university professors and deans, particularly the matter of appointing deans instead of electing them. They described this as being a retreat from democracy and a call for backwardness and weakness. They considered it to be a new law that is one more of the disreputable laws that have afflicted the country. They also said that it was an invalid law because of its lack of constitutionality, because it violates the principles established to guarantee the independence of the universities, and because it transforms university professors into administrative officials. They also said that the government came up with the new law in order to dismiss many of the university students and remove the various faculty deans who have become prominent political activists.

Here is what is being said by some of those both for and against the new change in the law:

Invalidity of the Change

Dr. Hilmi Murad, former president of Cairo University: "The sudden change in the Universities Regulation Law that was inserted into the national budget plan debate in order that it be quickly ratified amounts to a new law that is one more of our disreputable laws. It is also an invalid law because of its lack of constitutionality since Article 18 of the Constitution stipulates that the government guarantee the independence of the universities so that they will not be subjected to the authority of the government, represented by the minister of education. It is also a retreat from democracy in the university arena at a time when university professors are demanding that deans be selected on the basis of having obtained the highest number of votes in the deans' elections rather than being appointed after having come in first, second, or third place in the deans' elections, and that university presidents be elected by the professors of each university. Not only the universities, but also the entire nation, is surprised by this assault on the independence of the universities, depriving the professors of their right to participate in the selection of the deans of their faculties. This is something that constitutes a violation of the principles established to guarantee the independence of the universities. The new situation will turn the deans into administrative officials who will receive orders from the presidents of the universities who, in turn, will be carrying out the orders of the government. This will make the universities like primary, secondary, and Koranic schools, and the university professors will become administrative officials who will not hold any ideas or opinions concerning how to educate the young

generation, how universities should carry out their mission, and how to promote the role of universities in enabling society to advance and further knowledge. This is a catastrophe that is happening to our nation at a time when our leaders are claiming that they are endeavoring to have us catch up with the advanced nations of the world in the areas of research, science, and technology. There is no power and no strength save in almighty God."

Totalitarian Rule

Dr. Midhat Khafaji, professor at the Tumors Institute: "The law does not recognize the capability of Egyptian university professors to choose those who lead them. Our leaders erroneously believe that an appointed university president is more capable of doing this. Does it make sense that the opinion of one professor, that is, a university president, be sounder than that of a number of professors when it comes to electing a dean, especially if this number of professors can be as high as 1,000 as, for example, in the case of the Cairo University Faculty of Medicine? The new law was brought into being to guarantee that the dean who is appointed will carry out the orders of the secret police concerning expelling students whose expulsion is desired because they engage in political activities in the universities. This is because an [appointed] dean is one who carries out an action directed erroneously against the Egyptian people. This new law will lead to a lack of respect for an appointed dean on the part of the members of the faculty, perhaps he will even be physically assaulted, and he will not be able to compel or convince the professors not to go along with students in their demands for political reform. The regime, with its trend toward totalitarian rule, will not attain its goal by means of muzzling people. Instead, the reaction to this law will be one that is opposed to its objective. We note that the regime is showing hostility toward people from all walks of life, including workers, peasants, professional people, craftsmen, and investors. There is not a single category of persons toward whom the regime has not demonstrated hostility. This will only lead to a popular explosion that will blow up in the regime's face. We note also that any decision that an appointed dean does not want to carry out will be simply left inside his desk, and the professors will not be able to compel him to carry it out, especially since, according to regulations, he has the right to nominate one of the professors to become a department head."

University Bloodbaths

Dr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz Sulayman, former president of 'Ayn Shams University: "I am very surprised that the People's Assembly proceeded to study this matter without sounding out public opinion or without this being a response to a demand on the part of persons concerned with this matter. Have elected deans suffered injustices because of this system? Any time the People's Assembly embarks upon the study of some matter, this should be a response to something that has arisen, whether the request has been expressed by public opinion or by someone who has been adversely affected by this or that law or decree. The fact is that public opinion has been demanding a complete

change in Universities Law No. 72, and not just a change in one, two, or three of its paragraphs. The objective of the new law is to remove some of the deans of faculties who, under the guise of freedom, have become politically active. President Muhammad Najib, Egypt's first president, was earnest in his dealings with the deans of the faculties and faculty members and demanded our constant participation. But what we are seeing now has a number of precedents that go back to the days of Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir when he called us together in Alexandria in 1965, when I was a member of the Faculty of Sciences there. He told us: 'Tell me freely what you want, so that we can reform the situation in our country.' Each one of us said what was on our minds, and the result was that 10 of us were dismissed from the faculty and another 10 persons were transferred to places far away from it. We called this the 'university bloodbath.' This happened over and over again, and this university bloodbath is still going on. Appointment of the deans of the faculties would be a step backward. Election of the deans always makes them liked by those who elect them. But now an appointed dean can ignore anyone who is a lower rank than he is and is free to devote all his attention to serving those who have appointed him to his position."

The English System

Dr. Ahmad Mustajir, dean of the Faculty of Agriculture at Cairo University: "I don't know any university in the world where deans are appointed. For example, at Britain's University of Edinburgh, where I studied, the system is that the position of dean is rotated among the department heads, with each one occupying the position for a year. What is happening here in Egypt is strange. The system [used in Britain] should be used in the administration of Egypt's universities because it is the best system in the world for administering universities. In general, if the new law results in the selection of good deans, then there will no doubt not be any adverse effects. But if it does not result in the selection of good deans, then it will be a catastrophe."

Torches of Knowledge

Dr. Hasan Ghallab, dean of the Faculty of Business at 'Ayn Shams University: "The Universities Regulation Law of 1972, which stipulated that deans be freely and directly elected by the professors of the faculties, provided a sound democratic framework for administration of the universities. This was because the professors were the ones who chose the deans and charged them with undertaking administrative duties on their behalf. This law constituted democracy in its pure form. But it did contain a loophole, which was the fact that the professors of a faculty would choose three persons for the position, and then the university president would choose one of these three to be the dean. It was customary for the university presidents to select the deans who had received the highest number of votes. But a university president could select the one who had come in third place in the election, and he would not have to justify this action to a faculty's professors. This actually did happen at some universities. If we examine

this law from the general point of view of democracy, we find that having the university president select, as dean, one of three candidates who have received the highest number of votes and then not having to justify his selection is really the same as having the university president appoint the dean. The new law has not brought anything new, except for the fact that it has tightened the grip around the necks of the professors. Instead of their voting for three candidates for dean, the president selects a professor as dean. The whole matter is left to the president to decide. I imagine that university presidents will choose people who have shown that they are capable of being good administrators in the faculties' educational affairs. The only fear is that the person chosen will not be the one most capable of administering the educational process. I hope that the presidents will select their deans after somehow or other making a study of the professors' progress in their respective faculties. But, in the end, university professors always continue to be beacons of knowledge and will always remain this good nation's torch whose fire will never go out."

We Agree

Dr. Sufi Abu-Talib, former president of Cairo University: "Universities have made this proposal for a long time because it is not possible to have a serious discussion in the University Supreme Council, as it is now set up. The reason is that it consists of about 50 members who are university presidents, vice presidents, and a few deans. This is impossible. The text of the old law used to allow the president of a university to appoint [as dean] one of the three candidates, among the professors, who got the most votes in the election. Many of the professors were of the opinion that it should be the president's job to select the dean so that there would be no bickering, disruptions, and paralysis [of the educational effort]. No doubt the university presidents, when selecting deans under the new law, will sound out the opinions of their professors. But the passage dealing with dismissal is a strange one because it does away with the guarantees established for the deans and their independence vis-a-vis the university administration. If a guarantee were left up to the judicial system, this would be all right. The important thing to remember is that a dean does not administer his faculty. It is the faculty council that administers the faculty, and it consists of professors and department heads. These individuals are members of the council by force of law and in accordance with a certain system. This makes a given faculty independent when administering its affairs. The dean concentrates on dealing only with everyday matters. Policies are set by the faculty council. And many universities have the university president exercise the function of selecting the deans."

Concessions by the Candidates

Dr. Jihan Rashti, dean of Faculty of Informational Media: "Past experience has shown that the system of electing a dean has many negative aspects. Some candidates used to offer concessions and make promises to the professors in order to be elected. The same thing applied to professors

not actively teaching, because they also had the right to vote in these elections. We heard about some cases in which the competition was reduced to the level of personal attacks, and it was difficult for the deans, in most cases, to apply the law in a way so as not to anger someone, and there were also cases of flattery being used in a way that was against the common good. Also, there used to be a kind of disruption within the faculties that would result in bad feelings, and there was abuse of the democratic process. I imagine that university presidents, when choosing deans under the new system, will consult faculty members and make sure that the deans are of the required academic level. The thing that concerns a university president is that the administration be energetic and effective and, above all, take into consideration the interest of the students. I believe that the appointment system is better because all the dialogues and debates will take place within the departmental councils and the faculty councils. Both the deans and departmental heads carry out the decisions of the departmental councils and, in any case, the deans cannot make decisions without consulting the faculty councils. In the final analysis, the position of dean is an administrative position rather than a position that represents the members of the faculty."

Concerning History

The opposition and independent members of the People's Assembly strongly objected to the new law when it was being passed through the People's Assembly. Khalid Muhyi-al-Din, leader of the opposition in the assembly and head of the National Progressive Unionist Grouping, emphasized that it was necessary to postpone debating the law in order to give university professors and presidents a complete opportunity to discuss all the details of the law. Diya'-al-Din Dawud, head of the Nasirist Party, said: "The draft law which was said to have been proposed by the universities represents a violation of democracy and a step backward from it. This retreat from democracy began with the ratification of the system of appointing village mayors and town elders. And now the government is demanding that we agree to the appointment of deans—as if village mayors and deans were the same thing and they both should be appointed. If we say that village peasants are not able to practice democracy and that, because of this, village mayors have to be appointed, then how can the People's Assembly abolish democracy in the universities? I fear that the People's Assembly is falling into a trap and is stealing democracy from the universities. This will be a mark of shame on the forehead of the Assembly, because we are considering professors to be incapable of holding elections and are accusing them of treason and pursuing only their personal interests."

Fikri al-Jazzar, leader of the independents in the People's Assembly, said: "The government, in this draft law, has not initiated the idea of appointing the deans. The current law is a combination of appointment and election because it gives the university president the right to select a dean from among three candidates. The timing is not right for ratification of the system of appointing deans. What is the

wisdom of presenting this change now, at a time when we are demanding the right to elect university presidents in order to broaden the base of democracy? I reject this law with all my heart and call upon the People's Assembly not to be remembered in history as the government body that gradually closed the windows of democracy."

IRAQ

U.S. Stand Against Iraq in UNSC Analyzed, Bemoaned

94LH0080A Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic
4 Jun 94 p 11

[Article by Dr. Sami Sa'dun: "In Light of Last May's Review: Despotic U.S. Position Toward Iraq: Consensus on Isolating It and Inevitability of Its Submission to International Will"]

[Text] On 18 May 1994 in New York, the UNSC [UN Security Council] concluded its review of the blockade imposed on Iraq with the same conclusion as it did last March. UNSC members disagreed on the phrasing of the announcement that was to be issued. There was consensus among the members on underlining the progress achieved and on lauding Iraq's cooperation in implementing resolutions, with rejection expressed by one despotic member, namely the United States, and by Britain, which is subservient to the United States. Thus, the situation will remain unchanged until the review that will be conducted next July, even though fairness dictates that the blockade be ended because there is nothing to justify its continuation.

Representatives of all the UNSC-member states (excluding the U.S. representative) with whom Dr. Tariq 'Aziz, the deputy prime minister and Iraqi delegation chief, met repeatedly, particularly the permanent members, admitted explicitly the development in Iraq's compliance with the UNSC resolutions, especially Resolution 687; demanded that this be underlined; and urged Ekeus to submit his report and to start a monitoring period of no more than six months so paragraph 22 of the resolution, which means lifting the economic blockade imposed on Iraq, can be implemented. However, this majority opinion was confronted with U.S. rejection for purely political reasons that have no technical or legal connection with the text of Resolution 687. Iraq has demanded no more than the legitimate implementation of paragraph 22 of the said resolution as a first step in its struggle to have the tyrannical blockade lifted finally. This has become a legitimate right now that Iraq has fulfilled all the obligations imposed on it. This right dictates that the UNSC, in accordance with its charter and with the provisions of its resolutions, fulfill its obligations to Iraq. This logical presentation, on which the Iraqi delegation focused its efforts in its meetings and its activities prior to and during last May's review, was understood and supported by all UNSC members, except for the UN permanent delegate and, along with her in one form or another, the British delegate. It is no longer justifiable to blockade and isolate Iraq and to insist on harming its people. If the UNSC were free: if it adhered to

its charter and to the principles of justice and fairness which it advocates; and if it implemented its resolutions, the blockade would have ended as soon as the reasons for the blockade disappeared, i.e., as soon as the conditions existing prior to 2 August 1990 were restored. The argument that the blockade is maintained to deprive Iraq of its weapons of mass destruction has also been nullified now that the special commission and the Atomic Energy Agency have completed their work and admitted that only a small part of Section C, which concerns the banned weapons, remains to be completed. This part amounts to no more than checking some data connected with weapons. One should keep in mind that the special commission has, for well-known reasons, intentionally prolonged the duration of the blockade by fabricating a number of crises and by going to excess in extending the period for the completion of its mission. Even the monitoring period, which has been forcibly introduced, is not stipulated in Resolution 687. This period has been imposed by the United States and by those who go along with it on the pretext of ascertaining Iraq's credibility and its nonviolation of the resolution that prohibits it from acquiring or manufacturing weapons of mass destruction. The continued blockade is an unjust political decision that has been imposed by the United States through the UNSC, which, in the post-Cold War world, has become a captive of the U.S. position. However, the developments that occurred in the review of last March and that were reinforced in last May's review—embodied in the positive change in the stance of the majority of the UNSC members toward Iraq and in the expanding international circle demanding that the blockade against Iraq be lifted—have reaffirmed that UNSC domination by the tyrannical U.S. power will not last long and that this domination began to collapse with the breakup of the so-called U.S.-led anti-Iraq alliance within the UNSC. Thus, the despotic anti-Iraq U.S. position in the UNSC continues to be solitary and abnormal. In contrast, the expanding circle of those who support Iraq's demand that the UNSC fulfill its obligations to Iraq, including the lifting of the tyrannical blockade against the country, represents a development in favor of Iraq. This development has dizzied the U.S. administration and made it act hysterically. The U.S. media has characterized this development as a "crack and a break in the U.S.-led international alliance."

The change that occurred in last March's review was reinforced more strongly and with greater support in last May's review, thus forcing the Clinton administration to act convulsively and emotionally. This conduct was reflected clearly in the address delivered by Albright, the U.S. delegate in the UNSC, which abounded with outdated falsifications and allegations that contrasted with the international consensus in the UNSC. This conduct was also reflected in an article that U.S. Secretary of State Christopher published while he was in Riyadh, to which Tariq 'Aziz responded in an article that was published in the 21 May 1994 edition of the NEW YORK TIMES. The conduct was also reflected later in Christopher's warning to the Gulf states not to establish any contact with Iraq and in

the Clinton administration's severe opposition to the Iraqi proposal that was carried in the message Tariq 'Aziz delivered to the UNSC members at last March's session. In that message, 'Aziz proposed that the Arab League be included in clearing the Arab atmosphere and expressed Iraq's willingness to discuss disputed issues that are raised in every review. The Clinton administration opposed this proposal on the pretext that it contradicted UNSC resolutions!! Moreover, this conduct was also reflected in subsequent misleading statements and campaigns and in the U.S. administration's unjustified decision to deport the head of the Iraqi delegation in Washington on the pretext that he distributed press releases urging that the blockade be lifted!! The deportation decision is, in fact, a convulsive and rash reaction on the part of the U.S. administration to the successes scored by Iraq's political leadership and to the progress this leadership has achieved in its struggle and effort to lift the blockade and to enable Iraq to resume its normal role in the world community—successes and progress achieved despite the comprehensive blockade and isolation imposed on Iraq forcefully.

Even though the boycott will continue, by the will of a tyrannical member and an aggressor, until the next review which is scheduled for next July, what happened in last May's review, despite the ferocity of the Americans who bared their talons to impose their will on the UNSC, showed a crack and the widening gap among the members. Everybody in the UNSC, except for the United States and Britain, were for treating Iraq justly and for a legal interpretation of paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 that leads to lifting the blockade. This attitude further isolated the despotic U.S. position toward Iraq. This U.S. position toward Iraq is political and has nothing to do with UNSC resolutions. Paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 is independent and not tied to any other paragraph or resolution. But the U.S. administration exerts pressure in the direction of imposing other conditions, such as the question of Kuwait's sovereignty and Resolution 833 on the demarcation of borders. This is in addition to other conventional claims raised by the administration, such as the issue of the missing, the conditions in the north and the south, and some other similar issues. There is no stipulation that requires that the UNSC's fulfillment of its obligations to Iraq in accordance with paragraph 22 of Resolution 687 be tied to Iraq's response to these claims. The chief of the Iraqi delegation clarified our position on this tendentious presentation and exposed the political objectives behind it in his concerted meetings with the UNSC members and his interviews with U.S. and Western television and press reporters. The chief of the delegation warned of the dangers of allowing the UNSC to implement U.S. policies and to serve U.S. interests and objectives, thus turning it into a captive of the U.S. position. This is in conflict with the independence of this international organization and with the spirit of its charter.

The Clinton administration's determination to maintain the boycott and the blockade during the reviews made last March and May, which contrasts with the position of the other UNSC members and of the majority of the world,

represents an unjust position that reflects clearly the true character of the inhumane U.S. policy, the duplicity of the U.S. position, and the falsehood of the slogans of the power which alleges that it leads today's world and which is interested in nothing other than to accomplish its goals and to ensure its interests. But this despotic U.S. position will not stand in the face of the steadfastness and firmness of the great Iraqi people and the wisdom of their leader who, by the testimony of the Americans and the enemies, has surmounted the ordeal with amazing capability. Moreover, this position will not last in the face of the opposition of the international will, which supports Iraq and its legitimate demand that the unjust blockade imposed on the country be lifted finally and totally.

Saddam Praised For Law on Islamic Punishment

94LH0075A Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic
7 Jun 94 p 12

[Article by Nadiyah Shakarah and Hadi Mahmud: "Decree No. 59: Effective Cure for Theft Malady; Decree Reflects Sound Social and Economic Vision of Leader Saddam Husayn, May God Keep Him; Severed Hand Is Disgrace That Will Pursue Thief Throughout His life"]

[Text] In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful:

"As to the thief, male or female, cut off his or her hands: A punishment by way of example, from God, for their crime." [Koran 5:41]

A method that understands the Islamic shari'ah; that applies it on the basis of the intellect, knowledge, flexibility and openness; and that observes the logic of development, rejuvenation, and the nation's interest in progress and revival—a method like this puts the shari'ah in the center of life, keeps it in people's hearts and minds, and preserves its ability to keep pace with time.

Deterrent Decree

Revolution Command Council decree No. 59 of 4 June 1994, which provides for cutting off a thief's right hand, is compatible with the dictates of the tolerant shari'ah, especially since theft is not just an ordinary crime when committed during a blockade under which the citizen is experiencing extremely difficult living conditions. At this time when theft rates have risen, the decree comes to put an end to thefts. It will have a great impact in the future, perhaps even greater than that of the death penalty itself. If a malady gets out of control in a society, it must be uprooted. The decree represents a great deterrent for the weak-willed and the devious who will think long before they commit or initiate the crime of theft.

On the importance of the decree, AL-JUMHURIYAH has recorded the following opinions that have been expressed by clergymen, legal specialists, and citizens.

Judge 'Imad Shakarah, vice president of the Baghdad Appellate Court, has said:

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The decree is important because it reflects the sound social and economic vision of the leadership that has determined that this decree has the power to curtail the theft phenomenon, which has proliferated greatly, despite the presence of other firm decrees that provide for penalties reaching the extent of execution, as in decree No. 13 of 1992 concerning car thefts.

Shakarah expects this decree to contribute greatly to curtailing the crime of theft, because cutting off the hand will have a greater social and psychological effect on a thief than the death penalty. A thief will find himself the object of social and family contempt and will prefer death a thousand times to living with the disgrace of his act.

Judge Na'im Hasan Salman, a member of al-Rasafah Criminal Court, has said:

Cutting off a thief's hand will be an effective means to curtail the theft phenomenon, because a criminal planning to commit a theft will think twice of the fact that a hand that extends to get illicit money will be cut off; that he will have to live with this disability for the rest of his life; and that, moreover, his act will disgrace him, his family, and his children after him. As to the decree's exclusion of blood relatives, up to relatives thrice removed, Judge Salman has said that the objective is to prevent negative effects on family ties.

Judge Khalid Naji Shakir, a criminal court member, has said:

The decree is important because it amends the penalties stipulated in articles 440 to 445 of penal code No. 111 of 1969, amended by Revolution Command Council decision No. 13 of 1992 concerning car thefts, which provides for the death penalty as a maximum. In accordance with the new decree, the death sentence will be imposed in cases of armed robbery by a person carrying a visible or concealed weapon and in cases in which the crime leads to the death of a person. In all other cases, the law punishes the thief with cutting off the hand. In my opinion, cutting off the hand is more painful, and it will constitute a deterrent force because of its social and psychological impact. The decree is, moreover, derived from the Islamic shari'ah.

Just Decree

Hajj Ahmad al-Nasiri, chairman of the Alms Tax Fund, has said:

The decree is in harmony with the dictates of the shari'ah. God, may He be praised and exalted, has said in verse 41, of the chapter entitled Al-Ma'idah, of His noble book [Koran]: "As to the thief, male or female, cut off his or her hands: As punishment by way of example, from God, for their crime." There is no doubt that a decree that is compatible with the tenets of God, may He be praised and exalted, is a just decree that will have a great impact on curtailing the theft phenomenon.

Al-Nasiri added: a good deed is rewarded by God in the here and the hereafter and an evil deed is punished by God

in the here and the hereafter. Theft is an evil deed, and God's punishment to a thief is to cut off his hand.

It Strikes Fear in Thieves' Hearts

AL-JUMHURIYAH has interviewed a number of citizens who have expressed their happiness with this decree, which will curtail the theft crime from which they suffer. Hajj Husayn Najm has said, we suffer from numerous petty thefts in which victims find that the crime is not worth reporting, such as when a car tire, headlights, a gas cylinder, or some similar item is stolen, because bureaucratic procedures take too long. But a decree such as this wise decree will strike fear in the hearts of "thieves" and will make them shake in their boots. A greeting of love and loyalty to the wise leadership.

Citizen Khalidah 'Aziz has said:

A thief with a cut-off hand will bear his mark of disgrace with him throughout his life. We live under difficult circumstances, and the presence of such parasites that live off the livelihood that we earn with difficulty is a great crime. I expect the theft rate to drop sharply.

Citizens Khalil, Karim, and Muhammad support this wise decree, and they have talked about the hardship they experience with the thefts they experience in their areas in al-Sayyidiyah [as published]. Citizen Khalil Jasim has recounted to us details of the robbery committed against his home and the hardship he encounters these days in replacing even a small part of his house furniture. Thieves did not even spare the essentials in his home.

Citizen Karim Qasim has complained about the hardship he has experienced going from one police station to another in search of his car that was stolen while parked in front of his home. He has asserted that the decree will contribute to eliminating such people who are wreaking havoc on our country under these difficult circumstances.

Young Men Who Steal for Their Pleasures

Citizen Muhammad Salman has said: there are numerous criminals with a record of seven or eight previous crimes. Even though they have served their jail term, they steal again to satisfy their pleasures. This punishment will be the best deterrent for such criminals, especially since crimes are currently committed by young men who steal for no reason other than to spend on their entertainment at night clubs. [Salman added:] "I know a young man whose father is a millionaire and who was caught stealing a tire from his neighbor's car for no purpose other than to satisfy his pleasures and to spend money in places of ill repute."

Citizen Yusuf Hasan told us about how his house was robbed in broad daylight by a criminal who used a truck, telling neighbors that he came to transport the house furniture because the inhabitant had moved to another house. The citizen was tending to his sick father at the time. He had been away from the house for a week. When he returned, he found that everything in his home had been stolen.

Citizen Layla Kamil told us about the harm she has suffered as a result of the theft of her car. She found just the "shell" of the car after all its equipment and its tires had been stripped away. The car cost her her "life's savings," as the saying goes. She has expressed support for this wise decree, which has come at the right time to put an end to these criminals who live at other people's expense... And a "greeting of love to our wise leadership."

A Word Remains To Be Said

We will derive some of our words from the 5 June editorial of the sisterly *BABIL*. In this editorial, Mr. Abu-Sarhan demanded prompt enforcement of the decree and announcement of the names of criminals against whom the decree is applied in the media so they will be a lesson for others. We also say that a criminal who steals somebody else's sustenance deserves to be pursued by disgrace throughout his life. Cutting off the hand as a mark of theft is much harder than execution. Time has come to purge our dear Iraq of parasites, criminals, and evil doers. Blessed be the wise leadership and blessed be Leader President Saddam Husayn, may God keep him and watch over him. We are now reaping the fruits of his premiership.

Citizens' Complaints on Food Issues Described

94LH0076A Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH
in Arabic 12 Jun 94 p 12

[Article by Hana' 'Abd-al-Jabar]

[Text] People's complaints against agents of the General Company for Trading in Foodstuffs, who are assigned the task of distributing allotments to citizens by using ration cards, have not ceased. Complaints refer to situations where there are shortfalls in weight, price manipulations, and the failure to receive in full the items that are indicated on the card. Other complaints indicate that some items are being substituted for others of bad quality. Still other complaints maintain that the flour that has been supplied is very bad, contradicting announcements by officials at the Ministry of Trade, which pledge continuously that the quality of the flour that is being supplied through ration cards has improved.

People continue to complain, and distribution agents continue to swear by the most solid oaths that they are victims. No one believes them, and accusatory fingers do not cease pointing to them.

We want to know the truth. Who is really the victim?

The citizen, the consumer or the agent? If we had made a prejudgement that the citizen is the victim, then we would have been left to search for the innocence of the agent. The search was not easy.

It was as if we were searching for a needle in a haystack!

At the beginning, after receiving complaints about incidents of mistreatment, manipulation of weights, and extortion by officials at the distribution centers of the Ministry of Trade from every agent we met, we wanted to know what takes place at the sales centers.

Agent Complaints

Our first visit was to the Saddam Sales Center. We had not come to an agreement with them about an appointment beforehand. When we requested of them that we observe the operation of supplying agents with rations and flour, they denied us entry into the building!

Uselessly, we tried to bring them around. However, we were able to become acquainted with the complaints of the agents who were being supplied in front of the centers and with work progress in the center through what agents related to us about their problems. The female food agent for sector 45 said: "There is a shortfall in the weight, and when they supply us with incomplete items and we object, we are then punished by obstructions and delays in the supply operation of citizen allotments. Transporters assist them in this. After some days, the citizens that are included in the ration allotment tire of approaching us so often and begin to complain about us, accusing us of delaying the operation or, perhaps, of stealing their allotments. This is a false accusation against our persons as agents, forcing us to always remain silent when we feel that officials at the supply centers are manipulating weights." Agent (K.Kh.) comments:

"Don't believe what they tell you at the center. They will appear fair, modest, and lenient before you. Please come in with me and assume the designation of an agent and not of a journalist and you will see that those gentlemen are imperious and show no mercy for the aged or women, and that they respect no one."

Shortfall in Weights

The [female] agent (S.J.) participates:

"We are unable to object when we find sawdust or carton-paper in cigarette packets. Also, if we were to discover that a carton of cigarettes has two or three packets missing, or that a bag (a bag of rice, sugar or salt) has a hole in it or that a tin of oil is half-full through leakage or is filled with water, or that matches are without wooden stems, or, or... And woe to him who objects, for he will come to regret the consequences, such as a week's delay in being supplied, or maybe more. He would then face all kinds of blame and accusations from the citizens who fall within his responsibility for distributing ration allotments!"

As for agent ('A.M.), his complaint is about flour, especially that which the al-Hilal mill produces. He says:

"For the past two months, the flour has been bad. Sometimes they mix it with sand or plaster. At other times we see wonders. All the flour is siftings. When we ask them about flour and not siftings, there is no answer. Supervision is very weak here. Some mill workers say to us that operation of shaking the bag produces two grades of flour, one grade for the consumer, which is the siftings, and the other grade is sold to owners of bakeries and ovens, which is what they refer to as being available at the Ministry of Trade."

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Agent (M.'A.) [female] complains about delays in supplying flour. She says: "I cut off distribution on the 12th of every month and accept delivery on the 25th of the month. I face difficulties in responding to questions of citizens who have allotments that are included in ration cards."

She adds:

There is a shortfall in the weights. Two to three kg in a sack of sugar, from three to five kg in a sack of rice, and from time to time, more than five kg in a sack of flour. Agent (H.H.) [female] complains about the distances of the supply centers: "Some are in Bab al-Mu'addam, another is in al-Kadumiyah and a third is out in the country. This exacts from us costs for sizeable transportation rates especially as the transporter keeps raising his rates. If we were to object, then he would also punish us through delays."

Those are examples of conversations with some foodstuff agents with whom we met during our tour of sales centers. Certainly, not all their statements are true. However, not all their statements are false. There must be some truth in what they mentioned. For that reason, we feel that being fair with them is a requirement, and treating them kindly and gently is a duty. Officials at the sales center have to treat people respectfully. This is something that we did not sense during our tour. It is possible that those complaints that the agents voiced about shortfalls in weights and shortfalls in quantities of items contain great exaggeration. But the opinion of the agents did not influence us in what we observed in lack of respect and crude treatment. It is what we saw with our eyes. We did not hear it from anyone.

Where is the Truth

In spite of all this, we wanted to know the other side of the truth. It is not fair that we listen to one side and ignore the other. We went to the Ministry of Trade to become acquainted with the truth of what the agents stated. The supervisor states:

Mr. 'Ali Khurshid, Director of Trade Supervision, says: "Agents complain about transportation rates and that the transporter keeps on raising his rates! We recognize this. That is why we, at the beginning of last April, adjusted the transportation rebate on the gross value of the items which the agent receives."

"As for the statement that agents do not register profits because of shortfalls in weight and rising transportation rates, this is far from the truth."

"Again, the rate of profit for agents was adjusted at the beginning of April. In the interest of the agents themselves, we have been careful not to publicize it!"

"Do not believe their statements. If they were not making a profit, they would not have continued with their work. We, as you know, do not compel them to remain as our agents. Up until now there has not been a single petition by one of them to terminate his agency."

"But everyone complains about the shortfall in weights?"

He answered: "Every agent has the right to refuse delivery of any incomplete item, and is able to contact the ministry supervisor, who is located at the sales center. If his problem is not solved, he can contact the supervisor at the ministry offices. We have actually remedied complaints like these and compelled sales centers to reweigh the items that were objected to."

He adds: "The ministry is granting agents a percentage of items as a rebate to remedy the differences that appear as a result of weighing. The rebate rate for rice is 4 percent. That means four bags for every 100 bags. The rebate for sugar is 2 percent. For local oil, it is 5 percent, and for imported [oil], it is 2 percent for the whole quantity."

I finally asked him: "Is there supervisory control on all sales or distribution centers, or on agents?"

He states that this would be difficult to put into effect as he would need 400 supervisory officials to fulfill this task.

Our tour is coming to its end, confirming our statement that some trade officials do not respect people. We were right, because the refusal of the director of the Saddam Sales Center to respond to the problems and complaints of agents, and the lack of responsiveness to the press, verifies the saying that literally states, "Let the citizen bang his head against the wall in response to our complaints about his [the director's] and some of his officials' treatment of agents."

Tax, Economic Issues, Problems Addressed

94LH0078A Baghdad ALIF BA' in Arabic
8 Jun 94 pp 22-23

[Article by Suhayr 'Abd-al-Wahid: "On the Tax Scales, Who Are the Transgressors and Who Are the Ones Unjustly Treated?"]

[Text] At the present time, taxes constitute a heavy burden for many people. We never run across any store owner or owner of an enterprise who does not talk about taxes. And we always blame taxes for being the reason behind high prices. Everybody blames taxes for this. Then there must be a mutual misunderstanding between the people who execute the tax laws and our citizens. Have the tax laws and regulations, at the present time, become incapable of keeping up with the changes in our economic situation?

Are we on the threshold of tax reform in Iraq? Can we live without taxes?

ALIF BA' did a story concerning taxes, visiting numerous shops and meeting with the director general of the General Tax Authority, and here is the report:

On a commercial street in a residential area we met Mr. Majid Yunan, owner of a shopping center, who said: "The tax increase imposed upon us forces us to raise the prices of our goods and consequently to place a burden on the shoulders of the citizens. There are various types of taxes that we have to pay. We pay income tax to the General Tax Authority, and we pay the professional tax to the municipality of Baghdad."

The shopping center owner does a quick calculation and tells us that he pays the following: "Annual rent is 66,000 [Iraqi] dinars [ID], the professional tax is ID550, the income tax is ID5,500, and I pay ID250 for having the shops guarded and cleaned. The total is ID72,300."

What about this large amount of money which includes the rent, professional tax, and income tax and totals about ID6,000 per month? Is this a large figure? Do others think so, or do they think that it is not too much and is appropriate?

Mr. Abu-Qusayy, owner of a real estate office, says: "In our line of work, the government has imposed a high tax on us in order to limit the scope of our buying and selling transactions. Nevertheless, our market is constantly booming. Sometimes we find that people, in order to avoid paying large taxes, resort to continual buying and selling transactions, and a plot of land or house remains in the name of the original owner. Tax fraud may be committed because the price at which the land is being sold is not what is recorded in the books. This is in spite of the fact that there are dangers in doing things this way, since the seller might back away from or cancel the sales transaction. If the matter goes to court, the buyer will demand that he recover the amount paid. In this case, when there is a lack of trust between the two parties, the buyer will not recover the actual amount that he has paid, because the actual amount was not recorded in the deed of sale. However, there is a tax committee that assesses the value of the real estate sold, and the tax is set in light of this assessment, and this tax can be as high as 70 percent of the assessed value."

We ran across various preoccupations among our citizens concerning taxes. And another case involves the family of Mr. Nazim Hamdi, who inherited a plot of land. They said: "We placed our trust in God and then attempted to build on the land that we inherited. After we were pretty far along with our building, we stopped because we were unable to continue because of the high prices of building materials and labor, due to the tyrannical blockade that is being imposed upon our nation. During a four-year period we paid a total of ID40,000 in taxes. We still pay taxes on the land. Just last year we paid ID20,000 worth of taxes on the land. Should a vacant plot of land be treated the same as a plot of land that has been half built up? Even if we believe that the value of the land has increased, we have not been able to benefit financially from this increase in value. In fact, we are suffering huge losses as a result of the increase in taxes on the land."

"We propose a tax exemption in cases such as this until the blockade is lifted and the [prices of] construction materials go back to what they were so that we can finish building. Furthermore, we are avoiding selling the land so that our tax problem does not become aggravated. We pay taxes amounting to 70 percent of the value [of the land], and this is a loss that reason and logic cannot accept."

In a real estate broker's office, Mr. 'Isam Habbabah says: "A strange law was legislated in the area where we work, which is the New Baghdad area. If a person buys property,

he must pay ID10,000 of taxes for every million dinars [worth of property he buys]. This is even true for a person who conscientiously pays his taxes and has a file in the tax office. Why should this be? Their justification for doing this is 'financial soundness.' They assess a person according to his work and are suspicious about how he acquired his capital. They ask: 'Where did you get this?' We do not find this approach and this law in the other areas."

"The tax assessment system treats both honest and dishonest people the same way. There are good real estate offices that should not be treated like the others are treated. Also, persons who mediate in the sale of large buildings are treated the same as persons who sell a small house. And there are errors in the assessments. Is it reasonable that the tax system should equate a real estate office with a jeweler?"

A real estate office owner and former director in a tax office said: "The General Tax Authority demands that each of its branches each year turn over to it a certain amount of revenue. Last year, for example, this amount was ID40 million, and this year it is ID50 million. This is why the tax branch offices work hard and compete with each other to find ways to put pressure [on tax payers] and collect the required amounts of revenue."

According to the tax laws, no Iraqi is allowed to sell a residential home while he owns another piece of property, and not pay taxes on the home. But one director in a tax office in al-Rusafah arranged a tax exemption on his house, which was a clear violation of the law. This information was provided to us by the owner of a real estate office, who assured us that it was true, saying: "If the broker was undermining the consciences of his employees, in the opinion of the tax offices, then what about the action undertaken by this [tax office] director who committed legal fraud and managed to avoid paying huge amount?"

Another citizen talked about the amounts of the tax exemptions granted for his wife and children that have not been revised to be appropriate for the circumstances of the times we are living in. He said: "The tax exemption for my wife is legally ID1,000. For this amount of money, 10 years ago, one could buy 100 kg of meat, 100 kg of chicken, and food supplies that would last for a family for a number of months. Today, though, this amount of money does not buy one person enough food supplies for even a week. Is this not an injustice?"

At this point, we are wondering: Why is the tax exemption rate not appropriate for the circumstances that we are living in today? This also applies to the tax exemption rate for a single child, which is ID200, an amount of money that is not even enough to buy a child a small toy!

Mr. 'Adil al-Shawi had the following to say: "The tax offices have increased the tax assessments to a degree that one cannot even imagine, whereas the tax exemptions have stayed the same. These large tax assessments have induced people to evade the law and have furnished opportunities for corrupting administrative officials. The consequence

has been a loss on the part of both parties, the officials and the tax payers, and the result has been bribery. Instead of our citizens and government being served, our citizens and the representatives of our government offices have strayed from the proper path. This does not mean that everyone has become like this, but this is the general view taken concerning the parties in this matter."

Another citizen said: "We cannot claim that everyone is guilty of bribes, because there are honest officials. This is something that I have encountered. They investigate very carefully, and categorically refuse bribes or gifts. Nevertheless, the [tax] assessment committees are usually taken out by several people, and sometimes the director of a tax office or his assistant goes out with a group of people. Even if this happens and they accept a gift—how much will the assessment be reduced? It will be only, for example, ID50,000 from the value of a lot or a house. But, in general, the general prices are known in each area, and in each area there are many regulations followed by the local tax office branch."

Barbershops also have their problems. Mr. 'Abd-al-Hamid Fadil Gharib, owner of a men's barbershop, says: "Our taxes are assessed according to the number of barbershop chairs we have in our shop, and thus my taxes are ID30,000. In the case of some other barbers, the taxes are ID60,000. If we take into account the rent, workers' wages, and materials that I use, and the taxes, then we realize why we have been forced to raise the price of a men's haircut from ID40 to ID50. I propose that a worker's taxes be deducted by his union and that the union make identity cards for the workers that are renewed each year. When the time comes for renewing the identity cards, the taxes could be paid. Also, the payment of the taxes should not be restricted to just the master barbers. We are prepared to follow the policy of not hiring any worker who does not belong to the union and does not pay annual taxes. This would cause the taxes to be lower for the master barbers and would result in lower prices [for haircuts]."

After we had made our rounds, we returned to Mr. 'Aziz Ja'far Hasan, director general of the General Tax Authority, and asked some questions that arose as a result of what we heard when talking to people. We began with a question concerning income taxes and the high assessments made by the assessors. He replied: "The income tax is a tax that is directly levied on a person. It is not part of his expenses, and it is not like customs taxes that are levied on goods. Any person having an income subject to taxation is legally obligated to provide a report to the General Tax Authority for the period of 1 January until 1 June each year. This report is supposed to show his income from all sources, whether from working a trade, from doing business, from industrial activities, or from contracts, and it is supposed to show his [economic] situation. That is, it is supposed to show the actual earnings that he has made. The tax assessment is then made on the basis of this. There exists a bookkeeping system for income tax purposes, which was published in accordance with the law and which is obligatory for persons according to particular categories

and shows their activities. In case these accounts are not submitted or if the tax authorities are not convinced of the [veracity of the] income stated in the papers submitted, the authorities then undertake to assess the income in light of the following data: 1. information acquired concerning the person's activities, which is on file with government agencies, and this information comes to us from the government agencies; 2. information concerning the person's imports and exports, and this comes from the customs authorities; and 3. information collected by specialized committees called the 'field survey committees,' which observe the activities of the business involved on the spot, check on the type of goods involved, and request documents supporting this information."

We know that there is no such thing as a person who does not have a record of his accounts. Many persons have them, but they hide them. [In such cases,] the income of a person is then assessed in light of all of the above, [applicable] exemptions are granted, and the person's tax obligation is determined.

"Anyone has the right to either agree or disagree with the tax assessments. If he disagrees, he has the right to challenge the decisions of the tax authorities in front of a committee headed by a judge and composed of members who are financial experts. The committee is an unbiased one, decides all tax-related cases, and is found in all of Iraq's provinces. A decision made by any of these committees is binding concerning the person involved and his taxes. The committees also have the right to cancel, increase, or decrease the assessments. This is a legal right, and anyone entrusted with the task of exercising this right may do so."

Then we familiarized the director general of the General Tax Authority with some of the cases we had come across when preparing our report. They included the barbershops, whose increases in prices were attributed to the fact that high taxes, computed on the basis of the number of barber chairs in the shop, had been imposed on them, and there was the issue of whether or not this was a rational approach. He replied: "Concerning the barbershops, the formula of computing their taxes on the basis of the number of barber chairs in the shops is nothing new. This approach has been used for the last 10 years. Every barber knows that, if he does not submit his records, his taxes are computed on the basis of the number of barber chairs. Furthermore, if the barber puts too many chairs in his shop and this increases the amount of the taxes imposed on him, why doesn't he take them out of the barbershop?"

"When we set the rules, we did not increase the prices. What we did was to set tax assessments in light of the prices that the barbers were charging. We took into consideration the areas where they work. We know for sure that barbers charge at least ID25. Nevertheless, [we] compute the price per haircut in the low-income areas as ID5, on the main streets as ID10, and in the high-income areas as ID15.

"When we compute the earnings in light of these prices, exemptions are subtracted from the earnings, and then the

earnings are counted as taxable. The tax rate begins as 5 percent for the first ID3,000, and goes up to 75 percent for amounts above ID75,000. Total income is not taxed. The amount that is taxed is that which remains after the exemptions are subtracted."

But then he goes on to say: "Even these rules are meant to be only a general guide. The director of a [tax office] branch has the full authority to forgo these rules or to increase his use of them, according to the circumstances and facts of the cases."

Then we asked a question that had come to the minds of many people, which was: "Does the government really need to levy such high taxes?" The answer was: "Taxation has a number of purposes, and they are not all fiscal in nature. For one thing, they serve to redistribute income since they are levied according to each individual's ability to pay, and they support the nation's public services."

"Taxation is a world-wide fiscal system that has economic and financial goals, whether the government has resources or not, especially at the present time. Modern nations have come to have tasks that differ from the tasks that nations used to have. Governments have become involved in all facets of life, and their interests are no longer limited to matters concerning the army, waging war, etc. In fact, public services in a nation have come to constitute a priority that is supported by taxation."

We then mentioned that many of the General Tax Authority's laws and regulations were no longer valid and appropriate for the circumstances under which we are living today and that nobody had lifted a finger or taken the trouble to point out [the shortcomings] of these laws, in spite of the assurances given by the Presidential Office that it would revise the laws and regulations that do not fit today's circumstances. Mr. Hasan's opinion concerning this was as follows: "Tax law is always affected by the economy and vice-versa. For this reason, it should always keep pace with the economic system that prevails in the nation. We always keep up. We constantly make studies concerning this matter, and they lead to reform in the law that is in harmony with the economic situation. For this reason, the General Tax Authority, in coordination with the Ministry of Finance concerning this matter, has prepared studies with this goal in mind and we hope that the result will be beneficial. In the study, we dealt with the tax system and with reforming it in all realms."

So these are the taxes, and this is the state of affairs concerning them—complaints, mutual accusations, promises, a long wait, many studies being made, and solutions that have been postponed.

ISRAEL

Arab Jerusalem Boundary Issues Explored

94A10089C HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 24 Jun 94 p B2

[Article by Nadav Shragai]

[Text] In the minutes of the annual meeting of the housing association, which convened on the ninth day of the month of Sivan, 1928, for the purpose of establishing a residential quarter in the area, Yosef Feinberg, the secretary, reported to his colleagues that "after strenuous efforts," the committee had succeeded "some days ago in obtaining the government's approval of our plan to build homes in a large tract of 600 dunams east of Jerusalem near Kafr Abu Dis.... To ensure our right to this land, we paid 600 Egyptian pounds."

Sixty years after that meeting, the Jerusalem District Court is the scene of a legal dispute between representatives of the Administrator-General, some legatees of the property owners in Abu-Dis and officials of the state prosecutor's office over the fate of some 30 dunams in the area. Behind the legatees stand the members of Ateret Kohanim. The Jewish tycoon, Irvin Moscovitz, who bought some of the property on the site and is a patron of Ateret Kohanim, is a party to the litigation. The legal question to be decided in court is secondary. The real question is whether Ateret Kohanim and Moscovitz will gain right of possession over the property in Abu-Dis, now an Arab residential section, and establish a Jewish outpost on the spot.

The property at stake is located close to but just within Jerusalem's eastern jurisdictional boundary. When Israel annexed 71,000 dunams to the city in 1967 and applied Israeli law to them, the new boundary line cut through 17 Arab villages, including Abu-Dis. The village extends over 28,232 dunams, of which 780, about 3 percent, were annexed to Jerusalem. The Jewish holdings were also transected. Some of them remained beyond the jurisdictional boundary, in Judea and Samaria, and some came within Jerusalem.

Ateret Kohanim's interest in staking a claim on the spot is clear. For some months now, the right has been diligently collecting every bit of information about the government's plans for Jerusalem. On the basis of the information amassed, the working hypothesis is that it is not impossible that the city's jurisdictional boundary will be changed as part of the negotiations over a permanent settlement, such that land that now lies within the city will be transferred to the autonomy authority. In that scheme, Abu-Dis, where no Jews now live, is a weak point that must be quickly strengthened. And who knows, maybe it will be the means by which Jerusalem is linked to Ma'aleh Adumin.

The report published this week by Aluf Ben, the HA'ARETZ political reporter, concerning the upcoming talks between Israel and the PLO over Jerusalem's jurisdictional boundaries, is feeding the feelings of panic gripping Jerusalem's city hall and the right. Not for nothing was Minister 'Uzi Bar'am quoted this week as trying to placate rightist circles planning to camp out in tents in east Jerusalem. It is known that land has been bought from Arabs in the areas of Kafr Jebel Mukhbar, which borders the east Talpiot section, and Wadi Joz, and that Arabs who live in 'Ir David are continuing to sell homes. Realization of these acquisitions apparently is closer now than ever before, and considerations of timing will determine when

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Jews move into their quarters. For its part, the municipality is preparing plans for Jewish construction in the Wadi Joz area in order to connect it with the Mount Scopus in a chain of Jewish housing.

The fact that Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres has denied that he intends to hold talks soon on the jurisdictional boundaries does not reassure anyone in the opposition. As usual, the right today is not inclined to put great faith in the foreign minister's statements regarding Jerusalem, particularly against the background of the "letter that never was." In any case, the fact that Jerusalem's municipal boundary will become Israel's future international border with the autonomy authority provides cause to consider the lines that the army and the politicians hastily drafted 27 years ago: a political configuration, unrelated to any municipal considerations.

A Jerusalem affairs committee of directors-general secretly studied this contour some 10 years ago. The committee's work gained only minimal exposure. Its members offered four alternative approaches for dealing with the city's jurisdictional boundary, on the assumption that the boundary would become the country's international border and that a Palestinian entity would someday be established to the east.

The first alternative contemplated minor border modifications: the area of that part of the boundary facing west towards the Atarot airstrip; the area in the Beit Hanina region, such that another portion of Route 4 would be included in the city; the area of the line of hills to the northwest, in order to bring within the city a Jewish-owned tract that had been proposed for housing developments; reducing the same section from lands of the villages of al-'Azariya and Abu-Dis that fell within Jerusalem's jurisdictional boundary and transferring the "surplus" to that part of the land which, because of the division in 1967, was included in Judea and Samaria; annexing an additional 600 dunams of Jewish-owned land near Neveh Ya'akov; and a slight abridgement of the northern finger in the Atarot region as a compromise with the village of el-Bira, which claimed possession of lands in the area. If such a solution had been adopted, the West Bank would have taken 1,500 dunams from Jerusalem and given the city 6,500 dunams, with a minimal increase in the city's Arab population and even a decrease in the Arab population in the Abu-Dis, al-'Azariya and Kafr Ya'akov regions.

The second alternative actually proposed doubling Jerusalem's jurisdictional area, mostly to the east and west, bringing in Giv'on, Giv'at Ze'ev, Ma'aleh Adumin and Mount Scopus, Mevaseret Zion and the corridor settlements. This proposal somewhat resembled the maximalist proposals made by General Rehav'am Ze'evi, which were discussed in the debates over widening the city's boundaries in 1967. Moshe Dayan quashed Ze'ev's proposal in its infancy, and a more modest version that included Abu-Dis also failed.

The last two alternatives were different in nature from the first two. One divided Jerusalem's metropolitan area, including lands outside the jurisdictional boundary, into seven separate districts:

1. Jerusalem in its present boundaries;
2. Yehuda sector, including Gush 'Etzion;
3. Benjamin sector, from the approaches to Horon to Jerusalem's northwest jurisdictional boundary;
4. the Ramalla-el-Bira subdistrict with border adjustments, up to Derekh Alon and the Adumin plateau in the east;
5. a local Ma'aleh Adumin district, from the Jerusalem jurisdictional boundary to Derekh Alon and the Adumin plateau in the east;
6. the Bethlehem sub-district with some adjustments, and
7. the Megilot regional district, from the Derekh Alon line and eastwards.

Under this proposal, an absolute Jewish majority would be created in three of the districts and, together with Jerusalem, they would constitute, in the opinion of the committee members, "a geopolitical alignment assuring the vital interests of Jerusalem and the national interests of the state." The regional district made up of the Benjamin, Ma'aleh Adumin and Jerusalem districts would form a zone linking the Ayalon Valley in the west with the Jordan Valley in the east, a zone in which Jews would maintain a long-term majority.

But the final alternative, even more complicated, is the one that the committee preferred. The Jerusalem metropolitan area was divided into two separate systems. One system, composed of the city's quarters, was built of sections of Jerusalem and adjacent lands; the second, external system, was composed of subdistricts or regional districts and based on the currently existing division (the Ramalla subdistrict, the Bethlehem subdistrict and so forth), excluding those sectors annexed to the internal system. According to the plan, the first, internal system would include six quarters enclosing Jerusalem's city center. This division artificially created a substantial Jewish majority in four of the quarters and an Arab majority in the other two.

These findings were then presented to the ministers' committee for Jerusalem affairs. The committee's work, although the first in a series, was the most thorough ever done regarding the city's jurisdictional boundaries. Just this week, Knesset members Yehoshua Matza (Likud) and Emmanu'el Zisman (Labor) presented private parliamentary bills. Coordinating their efforts with Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert and the heads of the Ma'aleh Adumin and Giv'at Ze'ev regional councils, they propose annexing Ma'aleh Adumin and Giv'at Ze'ev to Jerusalem. In Teddy Kolek's days, the municipality opposed annexing any area east of the city up to Ma'aleh Adumin and suggested to the Likud government that if any decision to annex the eastern lands were made, Israel would have to make do with a narrow corridor bypassing the villages of Abu-Dis and al-'Azariya up to Ma'aleh Adumin. During the same

period, the city presented the government a position paper recommending an expansion to the northwest and the southeast, but there, too, the guiding principle was to add the minimum possible Arab population to the city.

Questions on Jerusalem Territorial Sovereignty

94AA0089B HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 28 Jun 94 p B1

[Article by Ron Keslo]

[Text] This saying may already be worn out from use, but it is still exceptionally apt: "Covet all, lose all" has been and remains, then and always, the central motto in our overall relations with the Palestinian people. That is how it was for the Palestinians at the outset, during the founding of the state of Israel, and during its first 20 years, when they rejected the partition plans and UN decisions calling for the creation of two states in the land of Israel. That is how it has been for us, too, over the past 27 years, with regard to settlement in the territories.

Although occupation was not the goal of the Six-Day War, it was reasonable that our victory in 1967 would lead to certain border corrections, such as straightening the Latrun line or moving the frontier 2 or 3 km eastward to restore the original Gush 'Etzion to Israel. It was even reasonable to assume that our future partners in peace negotiations—the Jordanians or the Palestinians, or both together—would agree to such modifications. No less reasonable was the assumption that if negotiations were conducted immediately after the war, that was how things would turn out. But the negotiations were not conducted at once, and no small part of the blame lay with the other side, which clung to its historic mistakes. And so we were able to make our own historic errors.

For example, Gush 'Etzion expanded towards Teqo'a in the east, the suburbs of Hebron to the south and the outskirts of Jerusalem in the north, losing its original significance. What is called Gush 'Etzion today is simply the result of exploiting the sense of national consensus for crude territorial expansion.

The truth is that this perversion has no decisive importance today in light of the settlement map that Gush Emunim has drawn, first against the will of the Alignment government and then with the help of the Likud government. It is now easy to understand that there is no future for an arrangement with the Palestinians based on separation—in other words, creation of a state of their own—without tearing down all these settlements. And when it comes to settlements, there is no difference to speak of between Kafr 'Etzion and Elon Moreh or between Moshav Argaman in the Jordan Valley and Yohvev Hadasa in the heart of Hebron.

When we reach a permanent settlement following the autonomy arrangement, every one of those will be an obstacle to peace in the same degree. And if we want peace, we will have to give them all up, or almost all of them. As it is said, covet all, lose all.

That is precisely what is happening to us in Jerusalem. There is no doubt that Israel's interests dictate that Jerusalem exist in the future as a united city under our jurisdiction, with municipal arrangements of one form or another. It may even be that with all the emotional, political, and urban complications that go with the city, that would have been possible in the less expansive borders of Jerusalem over its two halves as it existed in June 1967. Possibly, although that too is uncertain. But today's Jerusalem is not the Jerusalem of that time—and the change is indeed not to our advantage. It is not at all clear how the vast territorial appetite that we have displayed in Jerusalem and its environs sits with political logic. For example, adding to Jerusalem's municipal domain all the Arab villages that surround it. What is the logic of expanding the boundaries to the edges of el-Bira and Ramalla on one side and the approaches of Bethlehem on the other? Why were nearly all the new Jewish neighborhoods of Jerusalem built in the occupied, eastern part, and almost none on the rocky ground to the west of the city?

It is very difficult to describe to ourselves, in the impossible puzzle that has been created in this city, any rational arrangement that will permit a common life in the framework of a unified city while assuring the other side's interests and sense of honor. Even now, within the borders that we have fixed for Jerusalem—out of our own stupidity—it seems almost impossible, the more so since we are still eager for more.

We hear these days of demands and plans to extend the city's municipal boundary to include Ma'aleh Adumin and Pisgat Ze'ev. Who is the fool who believes that there exists some Arab party willing to talk with us about sovereignty over a Jerusalem that covers one quarter of the West Bank?

There is a special sensitivity towards this city, and not just among the Arabs. It must not be forgotten that even the United States has not recognized our sovereignty over Jerusalem or located its embassy there. Great sophistication is needed to settle this city's problems, as much as possible in our favor. It is difficult to suppose that refusing to allow 'Arafat to visit the city testifies to this sophistication. City Hall's intentions to put a stop to construction of a 72-home Arab neighborhood on the slopes of Mount Scopus (just to protect green fields, of course), together with municipal plans to build a "territorial line of Jewish neighborhoods" on the spot, definitely do not reveal such sophistication.

'Dream' of Middle East Common Market Examined

94AA0089D DAVAR in Hebrew 24 Jun 94 p 18

[Article by Mikhal Sel'a]

[Text] The moment that Israeli government officials soar on the wings of the utopia of peace and regional cooperation, the Arabs rush to shut their windows tight and shore up their defenses. The Arabs fear Zionist and Jewish domination over their lands, economy, and culture far more than they do Israel's nuclear and biological weapons.

To a certain extent, the Arabs may even be prisoners of their own propaganda or, more accurately, antipropaganda. When they hear politicians' announcements and the pleas of Israeli businessmen and merchants, the Arabs can safely say, "Sometimes even a paranoid gets chased."

Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres was one of the fathers of the idea of a Middle East market. It is not clear whether the foreign minister, when he uses the term, means a regional, ideological association or a more modest economic concept defined by a single economic market unifying customs, tax and labor visa systems, as is done in the European Community. The heads of Israel's business and commerce sectors sound more circumspect in their statements compared to Peres' utopia. They talk about "cooperation," which is merely entry of the Israeli market into Arab markets, and about agreements to open branches of Israeli companies throughout the Arab world and even beyond. It is precisely this that the Arabs do not want, because it is the proof that justifies their fears of Zionist and Jewish domination as an arm of imperialism.

The idea of a Middle Eastern market has occupied the Arab world for the past year. This is a preeminent issue for the newspapers, research institutes and international conferences. No one considers the possibility a simple one. Views range from outright opposition to agreement with innumerable restrictions and limitations. Even those who support true peace are ready to accept Israel as a good neighbor on condition that she is willing to integrate into the tradition and customary rules of the neighborhood rather than as someone who sets new rules.

Genuine peace requires open borders enabling cooperation between Arab states and Israel, "but every state according to her interests," says, for example, Sa'id A-Najer in a wide-ranging essay in which he makes a close examination of every possible angle of a Middle Eastern economic market. His comments were published by a Cairo think tank in an article entitled: "An Idea for an Arab Peace Strategy." The article is to be published in a Hebrew translation by the Tami Steinmetz Institute for Peace Studies of Tel Aviv University.

A-Najer believes that genuine peace entails ceasing the Arab boycott of Israel and foreign companies that do business with Israel. He thinks that Arab states must deal with Israel on peaceful terms exactly as they do with Turkey and Cyprus. Among other things, he proposes redefining the concept of "the Middle East" so as to include all the region's nations, not just the Arab world. Even he is very wary, however, of the seductive allure of the idea of a "Middle East market." Because of various economic forces, including the differing potentials for exports and imports, establishing a framework similar to that of the European Community, at least at the current stage, is out of the question.

Genuine peace is a peace that will be accepted by the Arabs, believes one of the leaders of Egypt's left-wing movement, Mahmud Sa'id-Ahmad. "A peace in which Israel is required to convince the Arabs of her good

intentions, that her existence in the midst of the Arab nation has value to them, too, not just to her. She must prove that her existence is worth more than her absence." For now, Sa'id-Ahmad believes, there is a contradiction between the Zionist idea and Israel's readiness to take into account the needs of the Arab nations. Israel's honest willingness to integrate into the Arab world, in Sa'id-Ahmad's view, is an "attempt to square the circle."

The more the peace process advances, and ideas and agreements take shape, the more economists in Israel conceptually and scientifically realize that a common economic market in the Middle East is impractical, at this stage or at all. This view is based on both appreciation of the national and political reality and analysis of economic data. As everyone knows, theoretical economic data assume a practical mein only in a national and political context. Economist Ben Tzion Zilberberg of Bar-Ilan University states without hesitation that the estimates of politicians and businessmen that regional peace agreements will be a fertile field for Israeli commercial activity are so much wishful thinking and reflect sectoral interests more than objective analysis of the facts.

Israel's commercial potential with the Palestinians and the Arab states is extremely limited and marginal in the sum of her imports and exports. The reason for that is not just economic. There are also political restrictions and constraints, certainly in the short term, in the webs of ties between Israel and her neighbors. Israel sends about 8 percent of her exports to the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and takes in from them less than 1 and 1.5 percent of her imports. These figures will not change very much even as the Palestinians increase their independent authority. Zilberberg believes that the Arab boycott eventually will be dropped but that this move will not alter the essential nature of Israel's foreign trade.

Concerning economic relations between Israel and the Arab states, Zilberberg, aided by measures of economic similarity, contends that Israel's export potential to the Arab states is relatively high but that the import potential from them is relatively low. For economic reasons, apart from political or emotional motives and residual memories of the past, the Arab states will want to place strict limits on imports from Israel. At the same time, it is conceivable that at least in the first years of commercial links between Israel and the Arab states, political constraints will dictate the forms of trade. The low potential of Arab imports to Israel will limit the high potential for Israeli exports to the Arab states.

The Arab states are interested in protecting their products no less than Israel is in protecting hers. Even now, Palestinian manufacturers in Gaza complain that their chances for exporting to the Arab states are slight because of each state's need to protect its local production. Sa'id A-Najer believes that if a country depends on imports of information or finished goods not available at home, there is no reason for it to prefer to import them from Israel when it can buy the same information or products from nations with which it harbors no deep grudges and feelings of

hostility; indeed, Israeli information is based, to a large extent, on information acquired from developed western states.

The likelihood of establishing a Middle Eastern economic market is also not high, Zilberberg believes. Study of past experience and existing modes of trade contradict the possibility of the Middle Eastern common market that Peres is attempting to promote, says Zilberberg. After the peace agreement with Egypt was signed, Israeli economists estimated that the potential for goods from Egypt could reach up to \$170 million, not including oil, while the potential for exports to Egypt might be \$530 million. In fact, the scope of trade between the two countries does not exceed more than 2 percent of the early estimates. Zilberberg agrees with the contention that political restrictions and limitations influence trade between Egypt and Israel. But that is not the only explanation for the limited economic relations between the two countries.

Economic relations among the Arab states are also extremely limited, and that is without the political factor of the Arab-Israeli dispute. Trade agreements between the Arab states, and the frameworks for economic cooperation that they created many years ago, have not proved effective, and the scope of trade among the Arab states is negligible. Most Arab states have a policy of protecting their products. The wealthy oil states can permit themselves to import anything from anywhere in the world at a price and quality that easily rival the products of their Arab neighbors, who seek to protect their production. The similar make-up of imports and exports to and from the Arab states also limits the possibilities for trade among them; most of them import staples and food and export raw materials, oil and phosphates.

A-Najer also notes this in his article. The Arabs so far have failed to establish a common market among themselves. Thus, there is no reason that it should be Israel's integration into the region's economic activity that makes such projects a success. Moreover, Zilberberg has used techniques of comparative analysis to study the composition of imports and exports of Israel and the Arab states. The result: Israel's import needs differ from the Arab states' export needs. Israel's exports, by contrast, are more similar to the Arab states' import needs. What will severely limit this potential will be the Arab states' national and political considerations. In his view, no more than 2 percent of Israel's foreign trade can be done with the Arab states, at least in the near future. This figure does not represent the fundamental alteration in the region's trade structure that Israeli politicians and officials have described.

The most important of the fundamental changes expected from the peace agreements in the Middle East are economic relations with states, particularly in Asia, that until now had no relations at all with Israel. The first steps taken with Indonesia and Malaysia are a hint of that, and even Pakistan's name has been mentioned more than once. The new political atmosphere that the agreements are generating is opening the gates of the Moslem states, even the most extreme of them, to Israeli goods. The atmosphere of

peace will also reinforce the readiness of world economic players to invest in a variety of branches in Israel's economy. Of Peres' dreams, this one seems more realistic than the one for a Mid-East common market.

Most discussions about the connection between peace and Israel's economy concentrate on Israel's economic relations with other countries. Zilberberg shifts the focus of attention to another source of economic gain that Israel can derive from peace agreements made in the region: a significant reduction in defense expenditures. The expected decrease in the military's manpower rolls will channel a professional labor force to civilian sectors of the economy and lead to increased production. A large portion of the budget that until now had been designated for funding defense needs will gradually be applied to other spheres, thereby fostering a steady and substantial rise in consumer goods.

Talk about economic cooperation in the Middle East circulates in prophetic times. Those in Israel speaking about such cooperation, businessmen and merchants looking to better their businesses, imagine themselves sitting in a posh hotel on the shores of the Persian Gulf and rubbing shoulders with shaykhs as rich as Croesus. Israeli economists warn against that illusion. Arab economists and reporters caution against Israeli arrogance, which is liable to prove that the paranoia of the past is not a figment of the imagination.

True peace must serve the interests of the Arabs no less than those of the Jews, says A-Najer. Only mutual realization of interests will guarantee peace. "No peace can be imagined that serves the interest of one side at the expense of the other."

Case for Releasing Shaykh Ahmad Yasin Argued

94AA0089A HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 28 Jun 94 p B1

[Article by Yosef Algazi]

[Text] Reports are circulating again that the health of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leader Shaykh Ahmad Yasin has taken another turn for the worse. Shaykh Yasin is serving a life sentence imposed three years ago following his conviction for incitement, carrying weapons without a license, homicide, and causing the deaths of Palestinian collaborators.

Despite denials by prison authorities, the rumors of a decline in Shaykh Yasin's condition have aroused waves of worry and protest, accompanied by open threats of revenge. The focal point of the ferment is the Gaza Strip, where Shaykh Yasin lived before his arrest. Palestinian sources report that handouts and sermons in the mosques describe Shaykh Yasin's condition as extremely grave.

The Shaykh's family, prison visitors (including police doctors who have examined him in the past, Knesset member Talab al-San'a, Dr. Tzalah 'abd el-Juwad from Ramalla, and Yizhar Be'er of B'Tzelem) and prison service officials agree that Shaykh Yasin is very sick and, physically speaking, a broken man.

He is described as much older than his age of 58. He is paralyzed from the neck down; he suffers from progressive degeneration of his muscles; he cannot move any of his limbs; his sight is failing and he has trouble hearing. Because of these impairments, three or four inmates attend him around the clock, feeding and bathing him, changing his clothes, taking him to the bathroom and seeing to all his other needs. Shaykh Yasin and his attendants are held in a cell containing a small kitchen and bathroom. He has the use of religious books, a transistor radio, a television, and newspapers. Shaykh Yasin lies in his bed or sits in a wheelchair.

His family knows that he is under the care of a permanent team of physicians. Whenever the need has arisen, he has been taken from Ashmoret Prison, near Kafr Yonah, to the prison service infirmary in Ramalla.

Not only is there no question about the quality of the treatment that he receives in prison, but it is also believed that he enjoys excellent medical care, perhaps better than what he had at home before his last arrest and possibly even better than what he would have if he were released from prison.

But given the deterioration in Shaykh Yasin's condition during his incarceration in an Israeli prison, every further decline in his health raises the question anew, Is it wise for Israel to continue holding him in prison? Do not the risks of continued imprisonment outweigh any "use" or security "interest"?

What will happen if, while he is being taken to or from the bathroom or his wheelchair, he is hurt in an accident? There will be a public storm, and someone will blame the Israeli authorities for the mishap.

Various Palestinian circles have been warning for some time that if, God forbid, he should die of his incurable disease, the territories would erupt in disturbances worse than those that broke out after the massacre in the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron. Some voices would also be heard contending that "it was the Israeli authorities who killed him."

Israel conditioned Shaykh Yasin's previous release on signing a political declaration denouncing terror against Israel and Palestinians suspected of collaborating with her. In light of the refusal of hundreds of Palestinian prisoners to sign any declarations as the quid pro quo for getting out of Israeli confinement, one can guess that Shaykh Ahmad Yasin will also refuse to sign one in return for his freedom.

Arab and international governments and institutions have frequently appealed to the Israeli authorities to let Shaykh Yasin out of prison. Some people believe that letting him out might temper Hamas and open up an avenue of communication with it. Even at this stage, his continued imprisonment is costing Israel in the political arena. It is highly doubtful that Israel's security would be undermined by his release from prison.

A reasonable fear exists that if something bad happens to Shaykh Yasin while he remains in prison, Israel will be

blamed by some parties—not just those hostile to her but also some that are close to her—because continuing his imprisonment makes her responsible for whatever happens to him while he is held.

The obvious conclusion: out of humanitarian considerations on the one hand, and self-serving reasons on the other, Israel should let Shaykh Ahmad Yasin out of prison, and the sooner the better.

SAUDI ARABIA

Cuban Trade Delegation Visits

94AE0132B London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 10 Jun 94 p 10

[Article by Mustafa Shihab: "Cuban Trade Delegation Visits Saudi Arabia"]

[Text] Riyadh—A Cuban trade delegation is to arrive in Riyadh today, Friday, for a 10-day visit considered to be the first of its kind. The four-member delegation will hold talks with officials of the Council of Chambers of Commerce and the Saudi Chambers of Commerce and Industry in Riyadh, Dammam, and Jeddah with the aim of discussing the establishment of trade cooperation between the two countries and surveying prospects for investment cooperation in the agricultural and medical fields.

The Cubans, who hope to strengthen marketing opportunities for some of their country's products in Saudi markets, also want to discuss encouraging Saudi investors to take advantage of the investment opportunities provided by Cuba's tourist sector. The plan would have two parts. The first part would involve attracting tourists from Saudi Arabia. The second would involve building new tourist resorts in Cuba and developing existing resorts. The Cuban delegation, which came at the invitation of a Saudi company, is headed by the president of Cubana Can Corporation, Abraham Maciques, who is accompanied by a representative of the Cuban government, Ricardo Jiyoro [name as transliterated].

Despite the presence of a Cuban government representative in the delegation, informed sources have told AL-HAYAH that the delegation will hold no talks with Saudi officials. The visit is considered to be an exploratory attempt toward initiating trade cooperation between the two countries, which have no diplomatic relations. The attempt is expected to pave the way for the establishment of relations between the two countries in the foreseeable, though not the near future. During its visit, the delegation is scheduled to spend three days in Riyadh. Afterward, it will go to the Eastern Province to hold talks with Chamber of Commerce officials from the 14th to the 16th of this month, and from there it will go to Jeddah to hold similar talks between the 17th and 20th of the month. It will then depart to return to its country.

Economics Expert Discusses Need For Privatization

94AE0146A London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 6 Jun 94 p 10

[Interview with Saudi economics expert Dr. Faysal al-Bashir, by Salah Sanadi and Riyadh Muqdad; place and

date not given: "Saudi Privatization Program Will be Well Received, Provided Financial Market is Developed; Shares of Profitable Companies Must be Offered for Sale at Market Prices, Not at Subsidized Prices"—first three paragraphs are AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT introduction]

[Text] The Saudi economic expert, Dr. Faysal al-Bashir, expects the privatization of public organizations in Saudi Arabia to be well received by investors, despite his pointing out that privatization must be accompanied by development of the local financial market and a legal environment in which it can flourish.

In his interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Dr. Faysal al-Bashir called for the shares of profitable public companies and organizations to be offered for sale at market prices, not at subsidized prices, so that the government can recoup some of the huge investments that it pumped into those companies over the past years. Shares should be offered on terms that do not concentrate ownership. As for losing companies, their privatization should be delayed; they could pass through a transitional stage so that their financial position could be improved, as has occurred with the SAFKO Company. Dr. al-Bashir thinks that profitable companies in non-strategic sectors could have privatization priority among the public companies—or those in which the public sector has part ownership, especially in the communications, banking, petrochemical, and hotel sectors.

The following is the text of the interview:

The implementation of the program to privatize public companies and organizations in Saudi Arabia crowns the development of the growth process in the country, and the state's general direction toward giving the private sector a main role in the growth process, especially since the private sector has proved its capability and competence both at home and abroad.

Moreover, at this developmental stage, it is in the public interest to get rid of agencies, which the state established when there was no highly-developed private sector and, specifically, the agencies and activities that do not enter into the heart of state activity. They can be handed over to the private sector to establish its developmental role, increase the efficiency of performance of those agencies and organizations, in order to bolster their competitiveness, and give the state room to concentrate its attention on the strategic sectors.

Privatization in Saudi Arabia is a developmental decision, arising from the course of free economic development in the kingdom over the past decades. Its actual implementation began during the past few years and, now, planning continues to expand it, by transferring more property from public companies and organizations to the private sector.

However, rapid results of privatization should not be expected over the short term. True positive results of privatization will emerge over the middle and long terms.

Form of Privatization Required

Generally, privatization is applicable in any economy in the world. However, the success of some form of privatization in one country does not necessarily mean it would succeed in another. The form in which it is applied is not hard and fast. There are differences between one country and another; a specific country's peculiarities must be taken into account, but not just the economic aspect only. One must also consider the social, historic, and growth aspects as well.

One of the important factors that should be considered in this regard is the distribution of sources of income in the specific country, especially where taxes form the main source of income. Privatization of differing economic activities and sectors is necessary for countries that depend on another, nearly unique source (such as oil in Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf Cooperation Council states). This is necessary to preserve their ownership of this source to ensure that they enjoy the profits that enable them to continue growth expenditures.

The state needs continuous sources of income so that it is able to make expenditures in strategic sectors, such as education, health, and defense. Therefore, privatization of the oil sector, for example, which provides 90 percent of Saudi Arabian income, is practically impossible, as long as there are no alternate sources of income. At present, this is not available.

Therefore, applying privatization in a comprehensive form on the various economic sectors in a country like Saudi Arabia is impossible.

One should note here that directed economies in the Arab region, under the aegis of the wish for change that is sweeping it, have begun to adopt what they please from the free economy and apply it locally. This carries negative aspects that are similar in their dangers and negative dimensions to these countries' experiences in the sixties, when they applied the directed economic system.

Privatization does not represent a cure for all ailments. It is necessary to apply it within a series of actions and reforms. The goals desired from privatization must be precisely defined, and the effects studied over the medium and long term. It should also be determined whether its application has provided the liquidity required by the specific state, or is within the framework of a comprehensive financial plan. One should also determine the sectors or companies that are suitable for privatization. Furthermore, there are sectors that the state cannot abandon, because of growth or strategic considerations. There are sectors and companies that cannot be privatized because they are losers, and the private sector will not purchase them when offered.

There are also sectors that cannot be included in the privatization program, such as health and education. While it is permissible for the private sector to enter these

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fields, to establish hospitals and private schools, the government's role in these sectors continues to be strategic and basic.

Government's Role

I believe the government should continue to own a share in companies that are privatized, even if merely symbolic, such as being represented on the boards of directors. The government's presence provides a kind of protection for the consumers or the beneficiaries of the services offered by the companies that have been privatized. However, this presence does not mean governmental interference in the management or policies of these companies, since it is assumed that the management of these privatized companies is purely on a business basis and will not depend on obtaining government financial subsidies.

In this regard, it would be possible to have recourse to gradual privatization for certain public companies, so that the government's share in them can be reduced gradually, along with the maturing of privatization experience of new sectors entering the private sector, with the consumer becoming used to obtaining goods and services from highly efficient private organizations.

Simultaneously with the privatization process, the subsidy question might be reconsidered, since the government should have an opportunity gradually to recover some of the huge investments that it has pumped into the services sector. I believe that there is room to reduce the subsidy in various areas. While subsidizing diesel, for example, enjoys developmental importance since it is a basic component of production elements in the agriculture and industrial sectors, there is room to reduce the subsidy for gasoline in a substantial way or even gradually eliminate it.

Saudi Lines

The Saudi Air Line [Saudia] is one of the prime public companies suitable for privatization in Saudi Arabia. Despite the fact that the organization is sustaining losses, in my opinion its losses do not stem from operational considerations, but from considerations related to its goals when established.

Saudia, which occupies 22d place world-wide, makes good profits from its international operations, while its domestic operations lose money. These losses mainly stem from its intensive continuation of a role for which the need has actually been reduced. The organization's prime goal when it was established was to tie the various Saudi regions together. This is a role that had great developmental, economic, and social importance at that time, because of the absence of alternative means of transportation, as a result of no paved road networks to bind together the kingdom's regions and cities.

However, the past decades have witnessed the state's expenditures of billions of Saudi riyals on developing a modern network of highways and huge transportation organizations, as well as the multiplying of individual ownership of automobiles. We are now in an economic and growth stage that is different in its realities from the stage

when Saudia was established. This requires reconsideration of its subsidized and costly operations. The building of a modern highway network made overland trips easier, more comfortable, and with less time required to complete the travel. For example, the trip between al-Ta'if and Riyadh has been reduced from eight to four hours at the present time. There are also public means of transportation, which are air-conditioned and more comfortable.

In general, one can say that there is a need to continue subsidized travel to certain areas of the kingdom that are difficult to reach, such as Sharawrah (in the south), which requires a long road journey across the [al-Aflaj] [Empty Quarter]. However, a guide might be needed for such trips.

With regard to travel in other areas, it should be organized—both in terms of capacity and number of trips—on the basis of experience, in order to compensate for any losses stemming from organizing trips on nonprofitable lines on the one hand, and increasing the organization's income on the other.

It should be noted here that ticket prices on local trips only represent a very small part of the operating costs that Saudia bears. For example, the price of an airline ticket between Riyadh and Hafr al-Batin is the same as the cost of hiring a car between the two cities. This reflects the size of the subsidy on local travel prices.

Development of Financial Market and Attracting Investment

Development of the local money market is an important step toward success of the privatization process. Therefore, there is a general conviction that development of an active and organized market must be done before, or simultaneously with, the privatization of public companies and organizations.

With regard to Saudi Arabia, a principal portion of the market's basic structure is in fact established. While there is room for its development, it would not require delay of privatization to complete the development process, because it could be done in two side-by-side processes, especially since there is no end to the process of developing the financial market. It is a continuing matter.

One can profit here from the experiences of markets that have preceded us, by choosing whatever is appropriate for us. It is also necessary to develop a legal foundation appropriate for the development that the financial market has attained. One example that could be offered in this regard is the question of paying in installments, since the banks show enthusiasm for lending. However, the question of settling disputes requires more clarification.

There is no doubt that privatization will help to increase the number of shares offered and, consequently, stimulate circulation and increase individuals' interest in investing in the stock market. These are factors that give the money market greater depth and dimension. Privatization will also help considerably to curb the flow of local capital abroad. Moreover, it will lead to hastening the return of that capital. Offering stock of public companies in a public

subscription allows the absorption of an important part of surplus liquidity in search of serious investment opportunities.

It is well known that freedom of movement of capital is one of the advantages of a free economy. When economic opportunities in the kingdom were less attractive than those available abroad, considerable capital went abroad. However, the situation has been reversed during the past few years, so that the private sector has regained huge amounts of capital for investment locally, along with the escalating impetus of the resurgent economy. There is no doubt that privatization allows vast room for the investment of more private capital locally. This might be one reason to call for the expeditious implementation of the privatization program.

Foreign Investment

The demands calling for opening the market to foreign investment, in order to profit from the huge torrents of international capital seeking investment opportunities, are premature. The local market in Saudi Arabia is still young and requires considerable legislative regulation to ensure that its performance is the best. One should also note that the Saudi market does not lack liquidity. On the contrary, there is a surplus. Local capital should be the first to benefit from the investment opportunities that the privatization of public organizations will make available.

However, that does not mean that the local market will remain closed to foreign investment since, in the future, after the financial market matures, it could be opened to foreign investment within certain conditions that would help to serve the local economy. The kingdom is currently pursuing a policy aimed at encouraging the attraction of foreign capital to joint projects. The state has pursued this policy since the start of implementing large industrial projects. The state would have been able to carry out these projects unilaterally, but its interest in the transfer of technology and expertise caused it to employ the principle of joint projects in the industrial sector.

With regard to foreign participation in the privatization process, limited shares could be sold to the foreign partners in the companies that will be privatized, if that would make the high technology, which the specific company required, available. A company or consortium could own a share, which might carry certain privileges if that gave the local company permanent access to the newer technological developments.

Jobs and Privatization

The question of saving jobs is one of the main issues to be dealt with at the time public companies and organizations are privatized. For example, Saudia has about 24,000 employees, while the actual operational requirement might exceed 13,000. Does that mean getting rid of several thousand workers, some of whom having worked for many years in the service of this organization and country? Therefore, privatization of companies and their activities on a business basis must never be at the expense of the

social factor. This matter requires a gradual advance and should be applied specifically to non-profitable companies that require a transitional stage where they can operate on a business basis in order to improve their financial positions before privatization.

Privatization will create a significant change in the labor situation in affected companies. While the labor force will be increased in certain organizations whose ownership is transferred to the private sector, along with the development and expansion of their activities, privatization will also lead to a reduction of workers in other companies that have a surplus of labor, in terms of business considerations with regard to employment.

I would like to point out here that expediting the process of "Saudiization" of jobs is one of the principle directions for the government and the private sector. Note that the total cost of employing Saudi labor, over the long term would not be much higher than foreign labor, if the planning for their absorption is carefully studied and organized. Despite the fact that this cost would be higher at the outset, the return from it over the medium and long terms would be considerably more, both with regard to organizations in which they work and to the local economy, especially since Saudi labor would spend most—if not all—their income in the country. The level of their high spending would stimulate demand in various sectors, such as housing, commerce, services, industry, etc.

REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

Al-Ahmar Interviewed on Leadership Issues

94AE0149A Doha AL-SHARQ in Arabic 15 Jun 94 p 4

[Interview with Shaykh 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, speaker of Yemeni House of Representatives, by Muhammad al-'Ariqi in Sanaa; date not given: "Replacement for al-Bid To Be Elected in Presidential Council"—first paragraph is AL-SHARQ introduction]

[Text] Although Shaykh 'Abdallah Bin Husayn al-Ahmar, speaker of the Yemeni House of Representatives, chairman of the Yemeni Reform Grouping, and senior shaykh of the Hashid, Yemen's largest tribe, is preoccupied these days as a result of the unusual circumstances Yemen is experiencing due to the war with the secessionists, he welcomed an interview as soon as he knew it involved the Qatari newspaper, AL-SHARQ, saying: "First I would record my thanks and appreciation for the fraternal country of Qatar—its emir, government, and people—for its noble stand supporting Yemeni unity and for its initiative in offering kindly assistance to the Yemeni people. I welcome AL-SHARQ's interest in Yemeni issues, affairs, and news in these and other circumstances." Afterward, the following interview took place.

[Al-'Ariqi] How will the empty House seats left by some Socialist Party members who have absented themselves from the House of Representatives and whose House immunity has been lifted be filled?

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[Al-Ahmar] After the secession is eliminated, the crisis ended, and conditions stabilize, the situation of these members will be decided according to the Constitution and the laws in effect in the country. Election procedures in the constituencies of members whose seats are vacant will take place in accordance with provisions of the law to elect new members to replace them.

[Al-'Ariqi] Will a Presidential Council member to replace 'Ali Salim al-Bid be elected from the Socialist Party or from other forces?

[Al-Ahmar] 'Ali Salim al-Bid's seat has become vacant. A replacement to fill the seat will be nominated and elected according to provisions of the Constitution. He will be from any force or organization, because the Socialist Party, in keeping with the ratio of its presence in the House of Representatives, is entitled to only one seat in the Presidential Council.

[Al-'Ariqi] Will the government coalition continue after the recent events?

[Al-Ahmar] The government coalition still exists and will continue to exist if the pro-unity elements in the Socialist Party leadership and base prove their credibility by adhering to unity and expelling the secessionist traitors from their ranks.

[Al-'Ariqi] What is your view of Yemen's future structure? What aspects do you think must be eliminated and overcome?

[Al-Ahmar] We are striving to build the Yemeni Republic politically, economically, culturally, and socially on the principles of Islam and the values and ethics of the Yemeni people, taking advantage of all the scientific and technological progress that has been achieved that will help advance our country and enable it to join the march of development and take its proper place alongside its brothers in this world, so as to contribute in its turn to securing peace and stability in the region. There are many aspects that must be eliminated and overcome so that we can realize the desires, hopes, and aspirations of the people of a united Yemen for a prosperous, democratic, consultative society where they enjoy justice, equality, security, and stability and exercise their right to life like other peoples.

[Al-'Ariqi] Do you think the present war will influence Yemen's future domestically and internationally? How will its effects be overcome?

[Al-Ahmar] Any war in any country inevitably has an effect on the future of that country. Thus our country's current war that the rebel secessionists in the Socialist Party and their co-conspirators against Yemen's unity and revolters against the will of the people have imposed will have its negative effects on Yemen's future and, indeed, on the future of the entire region. I think that the Yemeni people, with their faith and resources, will be able to overcome the effects of this war that has been forced on them—if they receive full understanding of these effects

from their brothers and if we work together to prepare the conditions needed for overcoming these effects and emerging from them.

[Al-'Ariqi] The Council has formed a committee to evaluate the situation. Has this committee presented the results of its work?

[Al-Ahmar] The committee that has been formed is still delaying its activities. It has presented a few suggestions that will be adopted. When it finishes its work, it will present a report containing in full form the results of what it has accomplished.

[Al-'Ariqi] Have Yemen's tribes participated in the war against the rebels?

[Al-Ahmar] The ongoing war in our country is still between the armed forces defending unity and constitutional legitimacy and units that belonged to the Socialist Party before unification. The apostate secessionists and rebels have pressed these units into their losing battle that they have ignited against the entire Yemeni people. Therefore, the Yemeni tribes to date have not participated in the war.

[Al-'Ariqi] Who are the persons with whom you will engage in dialogue? Will you agree to talk to persons from outside the Socialist Party? What will be the ground rules of the talks, if they take place?

[Al-Ahmar] The talks will take place only with the pro-unity elements in the Socialist Party, insofar as the talks are between the three coalition members: the General People's Congress, the Yemeni Reform Grouping, and the Socialist Party.

Civil War Attributed to Failure of Democracy

94AE0144A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 9 Jun 94 p 15

[Article by Wahid 'Abd al-Majid, Egyptian writer and researcher: "Why Was Democracy Unable to Prevent the Yemeni War?"]

[Text] The combination of the two processes, unification and the transformation to democracy in the Yemen, promised to be a successful experience. Unification had provided one of the most important conditions of democracy, namely the existence of several centers of political power that would prevent the hegemony of a single power over the state and society, contrary to what the situation had been in the two halves before 1990 under single party rule. Although there were glimmerings of democratic relaxation in these two halves on the eve of unification, when they joined together that created the relative political balance needed to expand that relaxation, for besides the two ruling parties in the north and south (the [General] People's Congress and the Socialist), which shared power during the transitional phase, a large third party (the Yemeni Reform Grouping), and several medium-sized parties arose.

If unification enhanced the opportunities for democratic transformation and represented a channel for it, then it would be assumed that this transformation would have

helped to support and protect unification because of what it provided in the way of opportunities for popular participation in building it. But this assumption was not realized for reasons that included the fact that the relationship between unification and democracy was not positive in all aspects, since there was some incompatibility between some merger requirements of unification and some of the demands of democracy. Many who were involved in the experiment did not pay attention to this incompatibility, or perhaps they did not want to notice it. Therefore they did not give enough attention to the problems of the relationship between the People's Congress Party and the Socialist Party. From the standpoint of strengthening unification, the merger or unification of these two parties would have been a positive factor, but it would have been negative from the standpoint of supporting the democratic transformation, because it would have led to the establishment of a big hegemonous party that would ruin the chance for a relative political balance.

In view of the enthusiasm that accompanied the declaration of unification, many thought that it had become an accomplished fact whereby partition had ended never to return. Therefore they gave priority to the demands of democratic transformation, foremost of which was this political balance that could not be expected to last unless there was continued competition between the two parties. Consequently these people, including the writer of these lines, did not hide their satisfaction when the attempt to merge the two parties failed, and they sympathized with the hardliners in the Socialist Party who rejected the Pledge and Accord Document which the leaders of the two parties agreed upon in May 1993. They were also cheered by the cancellation of this document and the break-off of attempts to merge the two parties.

The belief that unification was a conclusive choice caused preference to be given to arrangements that were more in keeping with democracy. This belief also led to downplaying the dangers of "sectional voting" brought out by the results of the parliamentary elections. The Socialist Party swept the southern and eastern provinces, while the People's Congress and the Reform Grouping got an overwhelming majority in the northern and western provinces. However, dealing with unification as if it were an accomplished fact and not merely a project, prevented this pattern of voting from being given the careful consideration it deserved.

But even though the voting pattern amounted to an alarm bell, the picture was not dark enough to make this alarm be sounded. The leaders of the two parties were vying with one another in reassuring us and in trying to alleviate any anxiety due to the "sectional voting" pattern. In addition to that, it had not yet become clear that the Socialist Party was suffering severe upheaval as a result of the change from being the sole party of the state to one of the parties making up the government coalition under a multi-party system. Such an upheaval did not have an effect until feelings escalated over the Party's failure to get what corresponded to its participation in unification. Its partners ignored these feelings, and even though Mr. 'Ali Salim

al-Bid's third withdrawal in August 1993 was an expression of these feelings of having been cheated, they did not seem to reach alarming proportions and become entrenched until the 31st session of the Central Committee of the Socialist Party the following November. Figuring prominently in it was a speech that centered on the fact that the Party had been a whole state and that it was two thirds of the land, resources, and work cadres. Therefore that session signaled an essential change in the policy of the Socialist Party, from trying to reform the unification process on the basis of the fundamentals agreed upon, to trying to create new fundamentals not contingent upon the political, partisan-parliamentary balance, but rather upon the balance between the two former halves.

Thus the insensitivity of the leadership of the People's Congress Party to the Socialist Party leadership's feelings of having been cheated led to a political crisis that escalated with record speed. With it, the incompatibility between democracy and unification became only too obvious, since the Socialist leadership retreated from its acceptance of the instruments of democracy as long as they were based on a demographic balance not in its favor (the population of the south is about one-fifth of Yemen's population) especially since the practice of democracy did not give it enough time to overcome the "sectional loyalties." The leadership of the People's Congress could have reduced the chances that the crisis would escalate by showing greater sensitivity to the feelings of the Socialist leadership that it had been cheated when al-Bid resorted to his third withdrawal. He had been angered by what he considered to be the marginalization of his role as a partner in forging unification, and a reduction of his authority. That was reflected in the conflicts over constitutional amendments in the wake of the parliamentary elections. True, the Socialist Party had obtained its most important demands, especially with regard to local administration, but the problem of the role of the vice president within the framework of the new institution of the presidency, which is composed of a president and vice president instead of the five-member council, remained unsolved. The Socialist Party had demanded that the president and his vice president be elected together, contrary to what the People's Congress wanted, that the president appoint his vice president.

The significance of this last option was that al-Bid would be changed from a partner to President 'Ali 'Abdallah in decisionmaking to a subordinate who would receive directives and implement them. Coupled with that were fears that the institution of the presidency would be confined to the president alone, as has happened in several Arab states. And these fears persisted despite the postponement of the constitutional amendments, and the subsequent continuation of the format of the five-member presidential council. The crisis escalated quickly, because al-Bid's third withdrawal was not silent like his previous ones in 1992. Rather it was an active, dynamic one aimed at revising the fundamentals of unification. Since that time, the Socialist Party has behaved as the opposition, and sometimes as an agitator, even though it officially remained a partner in the

government, and even though it had signed the government coalition document, the ninth item of which obligates those party to it to "not adopt positions in opposition to policies agreed upon."

Thus, competition between the two parties lost the positive, balancing character that had been hoped of it, and it turned into a fierce struggle that included a rift that was linked to the rapid escalation of the crisis. Most of the leaders and cadres of the Socialist Party began to return to Aden from Sanaa, so that the crisis became institutionalized. As 1993 came to an end, it appeared that the crisis was no longer between the two parties, but was also between the two halves as an extension of the previous conflicts between them. Pre-unification rhetoric again pervaded the debates between the two parties and embodied the essence of the accusations exchanged between them. Thus the crisis came to have an aspect corresponding to the sicknesses of inter-Arab crises, especially the sickness of lack of mutual trust. That led to Arab mediation efforts by Egypt, the Emirates, Jordan, and the Sultanate of Oman, when it was clear that the democratic instruments had been unable to solve it, since attempts at dialogue, which had been undertaken since October 1993 by Yemeni opposition forces, had failed because of the lack of seriousness of the leaderships of the People's Congress and the Socialist Party. This caused the "national opposition bloc," to accuse them of procrastination and delay, in a statement issued on 12 December 1993.

Even though there were still hopes of a democratic solution to the crisis, this solution was no longer possible without serious dialogue on the fundamentals of unification itself. However, this condition was lacking since the rift between the two parties became entrenched, since each refused to listen to the other. Accusations took the place of dialogue, about which their talk became a kind of maneuvering to gain a political following. Thus the crisis had to come to a dead end, for the efforts to organize a national dialogue had not borne fruit, nor had Arab mediation efforts succeeded, even though the Pledge and Accord Document was agreed upon, which the two sides scrapped before the ink had dried. Thus the crisis of trust between them came to a head. And when some opposition forces demanded the resignation of both 'Alis, this was not possible, for voluntarily stepping down from power to save the country is not an Arab custom, otherwise Saddam Husayn would have been the first to resign in years. Moreover, democracy in Yemen is recent, and previous traditions pertaining to the practice and transfer of power had not emerged, nor had any for dealing with the problem of lack of trust. The change to democracy does not bear fruit unless it is given enough time for a new political elite to appear, less affected by the legacy of historical conflict, and better able to build mutual trust.

The tendency of most Yemeni parties after unification, including the People's Congress and the Socialist Party, was to adopt the principle of transfer of power in their programs out of hope for the future. But raising the slogan of transfer is not enough despite its importance, because

democratic traditions are acquired through practice. Moreover, what is most important in a situation like that of Yemen is to bring about a change in the leadership of the parties themselves. And when the matter relates to parties that have a pervasive legacy such as the People's Congress and the Socialist Party, the spread of democracy in them needs even more time. Therefore attention ought to have been given to the importance of giving priority to preserving unity, even if its fundamentals had to be altered in the direction of a federation, in order to provide the opportunity and time for democratic transformation of greater depth. But preserving unity in this sense required the existence of the ability for dialogue that the two parties lacked, being unable to hold dialogue between themselves, as well as internally. The fact is that they had never known internal dialogue in their lives; indeed one of them was accustomed to solving conflicts with bloody purges. When the crisis between them reached a dead end, arms became the way to settle it, especially since the process of unification had not been seriously approached by the armed forces of the two halves. As a result also of the lack of trust, both of the parties had tried to keep control over the army.

Thus, perhaps those who were bothered by the idea of the two parties merging within one year, preferring them to remain competitive as a requirement of democracy, did not imagine that the alternative would be a ruinous struggle between them as an extension of the battles of the two halves, since the fear of autocracy latent in the growth of a large hegemonous party predominated, because fear of a divisive war had not been taken into account at the time. The matter was not one of choice between democracy and unification, because hopes were high for unification and democracy. But democracy did not have enough time, nor the right conditions to strengthen unity. The outbreak of war finally wrecked both, whatever the final outcome.

War's Impact on Public Health Situation Discussed

94AE0149B Doha AL-SHARQ in Arabic 17 Jun 94 p 5

[Interview with Dr. Najib Sa'id Ghanim, Minister of Public Health, by Muhammad al-'Ariqi in Sanaa; date not given: "War Has Led to Challenges and Difficulties Facing Health Sector"—first paragraph is AL-SHARQ introduction]

[Text] The current war in Yemen has led to mobilization of many sectors in the country—the most prominent of them, after the army, being the health sector, which has faced great pressure from the war's effects and results in terms of human injuries. AL-SHARQ met with Yemen's minister of health, Dr. Najib Sa'id Ghanim, in Sanaa. He spoke in the following interview about conditions in this sector.

[Al-'Ariqi] How is the health situation in Yemen in light of the current circumstances?

[Ghanim] Health work has faced a series of difficulties and problems. At the same time, we have had a number of priorities, which were the focus of the first conference on

health development last February. At the outbreak of the war, which aims to damage Yemen's unity and development plan, the burdens and challenges have increased. The war has imposed on us a reality full of difficulties. We are now giving maximum priority to confronting the war's results—injuries in both civilian and military ranks. These have increased the burden on hospitals, especially those close to the theater of operations or in the major cities and a number of governorates from which the forces of the other side have been ejected. Thus, our reality is full of challenges and difficulties.

Overcoming Shortage of Necessities

[Al-'Ariqi] How is the lack of necessities—beds, blood, medical personnel, ambulances, and medicines—being overcome?

[Ghanim] For medical personnel we used to rely to a great extent on a large number of foreign, non-Yemeni workers. Unfortunately, part of this work force—over 90 percent—has left Yemen by political decision of their countries. More left than had to, since conditions in the largest major cities and all the governorates that the forces of the constitutionally legitimate government reach have been secure, and protection is available in them. There was no justification for their leaving, but it seems that the departure of these personnel took place for political reasons. We have therefore developed a great shortage of medical personnel. As for beds, there is a continuing shortage of them; nevertheless, we can now deal with a large part of this shortage. We have converted some health public buildings into working hospitals and many of them into field health centers with government resources. A large number of beds have been absorbed and equipped in these centers.

Blood is now available, particularly because here in Yemen—thank God!—there are individuals who donate blood.

We were suffering a great shortage of medical supplies. However, now that the government has taken a very serious stand concerning the circumstances the country is experiencing, it is trying to fill part of this shortage.

There is also international aid, and there are contributions from some organizations, especially the World Health Organization.

There are humanitarian initiatives from some fraternal countries, especially Qatar and Jordan. The position of these two countries has strengthened us with supplies of medicine and good medical personnel. Jordan sent a medical mission the day following the [outbreak of] war. This mission was sent by King Husayn personally and came from Husayn Medical City. A medical team from Qatar arrived as part of a complete medical mission. I wish to register my profound thanks on this occasion and the thanks of Yemen's government and people to the generous stands of the State of Qatar and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

[Al-'Ariqi] How are you dealing with emergency ambulances?

[Ghanim] As for evacuation ambulances, there is a great shortage of ambulance vehicles. Field hospitals have therefore been set up. Emergency cases are treated and housed in these hospitals in an attempt to save lives; then these cases are evacuated to the nearest permanent hospital, especially when the case is serious. So despite the shortage of vehicles designated as ambulances, we are using all resources to provide care to the injured either in forward hospitals or by moving them to permanent hospitals in the major cities.

When a case is too severe and too much for our facilities and requires that it be moved quickly, we ask the armed forces to transport such cases by helicopter. The military forces have provided considerable support, done gratifying work, and given great help in this area.

Nevertheless, the need for first-aid vehicles and ambulances remains, given the severe shortage in this area.

[Al-'Ariqi] The Red Cross offered to provide its assistance. Have you benefitted from these services?

[Ghanim] The Red Cross is now present and has expressed readiness to help with supplies and medicine. As far as I know, it is coordinating with the Yemeni Red Crescent and working directly with hospitals without consulting the Health Ministry. In fact, we still do not know the amount of assistance from the Red Cross, since it does not go through the Health Ministry. As for the Yemeni Red Crescent, I think its resources are limited; nevertheless, it is helping to save the wounded.

Volunteer Work

[Al-'Ariqi] What is the role of volunteer work under these circumstances?

[Ghanim] In fact, I have addressed an appeal to male and female students in the medical faculty, especially fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-level students in all branches. The response has been very large and gratifying.

Women students have been concentrated in the hospitals of the main cities close to their places of residence. They are now working in the hospitals of the capital district. A group of male medical students has been sent to Ta'izz, Ibb, and al-Bayda'. They are now doing great work.

[Al-'Ariqi] What about the role of doctors under these circumstances?

[Ghanim] Doctors have doubled their efforts. I do not deny that there are many doctors who are working 24 hours a day at most hospitals, especially those near the theater of operations. I wish to thank the Yemeni and non-Yemeni medical personnel now in the hospitals: their presence expresses a noble patriotic, humanitarian, and Islamic stand full of loyalty and devotion to work. They are working now on a mobilized basis 24 hours a day.

[Al-'Ariqi] Have medical services in hospitals and health centers been affected by the pressures on them from injuries arriving from the fronts?

[Ghanim] Of course. Many hospital facilities are being used to receive incoming wounded and injured civilians and military men. This is taking place at the expense of external clinics and at the expense of implementing the regular program at each hospital. However, we have been concerned with not falling short in working to absorb cases resulting from the war.

[Al-'Ariqi] Have some health installations suffered damage because of the war?

[Ghanim] Yes, the al-Rahidah hospital was subjected to scud missile attack, and part of it was destroyed. We were able to repair it and get it back into working condition, and it has begun operating again.

The national hospital in Sanaa suffered damage because it was the principal target of the scud missile that landed nearby and destroyed 90 percent of the hospital's glass and aluminum. Much of the hospital has been repaired in cooperation with the economic organization and military medical services, and it has been restored to operation.

[Al-'Ariqi] Did the bombardment cause injury to people inside the hospitals?

[Ghanim] Yes, there were injuries in al-Rahidah among medical personnel. There was injury in the national hospital—injuries to Yemeni and non-Yemeni medical personnel. One patient died during an operation because equipment stopped working.

[Al-'Ariqi] The president directed that a relief convoy be equipped to carry food and medicine to the residents of the city of Aden, but it was refused by the other side. How will the medicines that were in the convoy be distributed?

[Ghanim] We now are present in the theater of operations. Medical personnel are working in field and permanent hospitals near the field of operations in coordination with members of the armed forces.

All directives emanating from the president or the Presidential Council, the acting prime minister, and the parliamentary leadership are being implemented to the letter. The Health Ministry helped prepare the convoy. We gave assurance that we had the readiness and resources to confront any emergency or any need on the part of our brothers in Aden and Hadramawt or any other governorate. We are now getting ready to receive cases and injuries and reopen and reequip everything the war has destroyed in those governorates. As for the convoys that went to Aden but did not enter, they will be distributed among the neighboring regions.

Role of International Organizations

[Al-'Ariqi] After the situation in general and the health situation in particular was presented to countries and

international organizations, did these countries and international organizations respond with medical aid?

[Ghanim] We are still discussing the giving of aid by international organizations. The World Health Organization was prompt in offering us aid. The remaining organizations are still studying the possibility of offering such aid to Yemen. They have a team to explore the facts about the amount of aid to be offered to Yemen in various areas. Some of these organizations have made promises that we hope will become reality.

[Al-'Ariqi] What are the most important necessities on which you are now concentrating?

[Ghanim] The main necessities are medical supplies, which remain in short supply, materials used in rehabilitating those disabled because of the war, and certain medical requirements. Also, the shortage of medical personnel needs to be met. These are the main things as far as the Health Ministry is concerned.

Yemeni-Qatari Relations

[Al-'Ariqi] What is your assessment of Yemeni-Qatari relations in general, and of health relations in particular?

[Ghanim] We in Yemen appreciate these relations. It is a relationship that is constantly growing. I can say that it is better than excellent. I am not exaggerating when I say this, for our brothers in Qatar have been quick to respond to any appeal coming from Yemen. They were present during the earthquake. They were present when medical aid was given. They built a large hospital in al-Hujariyah in the Ta'izz governorate, the Khalifah Hospital. They carried out a practical program to put this hospital into operation and supported it with extensive technical facilities for treatment. It will be completed soon, God willing. Now they have responded to the circumstances of the war in Yemen, sending a good medical team and a large amount of medicine. They have promised to send more medical teams and medicines and any other things that Yemen requests.

The political position that Qatar has taken on the events in Yemen is a good and outstanding one. The brothers in Qatar stood alone in this splendid, noble position, which is contributing to solving the problem in Yemen. They have clearly spelled out their political position on the problem. They are the only Gulf country that was able to perceive what really was happening in Yemen and evaluate the situation in Yemen as it was on the ground. They gave assurances that they were for Yemen's unity and constitutional legitimacy, for the elected government, and for the elections in which the Yemeni people spoke their will.

The Yemeni people will therefore record Qatar's stand with letters of gold in their memory. They will not forget this stand or forget their lasting gratitude to the State of Qatar, under the leadership of His Highness Amir Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani and His Highness Crown Prince Shaykh Hamad Bin-Khalifah Al Thani; neither will they forget their great gratitude to the Qatari people and all the information media there that have told the truth about what is happening in Yemen.

INDIA

India-China Joint Panel Meets in New Delhi

94AS0359A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 16 Jun 94 p 1

[Article by Business Times Staff and Agencies: "India Backs China's Re-Entry Into GATT"]

[Text] New Delhi, June 15—India strongly backs China's re-entry into the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) as it would ensure greater growth in trade volume, the commerce minister, Mr Pranab Mukherjee, said today.

Addressing the fifth India-China joint group meeting on economic relations, trade and science and technology here, the minister said India continues to be interested in joining the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation (APEC) forum for greater co-operation in the Asia Pacific region. Mr Mukherjee hoped that China would extend its support in this regard.

The Chinese delegation to the group meeting is headed by Ms Wu Yi, Chinese minister of foreign trade and economic co-operation.

Complimenting the Chinese for their "tremendous industrial and agricultural success", Mr Mukherjee said India shared with China the view that improvement in Chinese trade position should have benefits for other Asian economies.

Unfortunately, the major beneficiaries of a booming China have been mostly in the East Asian region, he noted and hoped that "some of the dynamism in trade is also reflected in similar successes between India and China" in their bilateral trade.

Quoting a report published by the Centre for Global Trade Development, (US), Mr Mukherjee said both sides were responsible to realise the "billions of dollars" of "untapped" trade potential.

Mr Mukherjee suggested that more exchange of business delegations as well as greater participation in trade fairs between the two countries would help in boosting bilateral trade.

He said another factor for low levels of trade was due to the fact that though India and China remain neighbours, bilateral trade is largely carried out through middlemen and intermediaries in Singapore, Hong Kong and Macau. "Direct trade would be beneficial for both sides," he said.

Mr Mukherjee said the question of collaboration between India and China in iron ore mining and coking coal has been under study for some time. Mr Mukherjee indicated that many areas of co-operation such as the telecommunication sector, chemicals and petrochemicals, computer software, construction, consultancy and tourism could also be explored for mutual benefit.

Addressing a press conference at the end of the joint group meeting, Ms Wu said China would take strict action

against Chinese companies dumping goods in other countries. An ordinance to this effect is expected to be promulgated in China soon.

Ms Wu's response came in reply to a question about the increasing incidence of dumping of Chinese goods into India. "Please provide me with the details and we promise action," Ms Wu said.

The Chinese minister revealed that in her talks with Mr Mukherjee she had said that the trade between the two countries were being carried on through intermediaries and there was a case for removing these intermediaries. She said that it was not known to her why these intermediaries were there but she was sure that "man made factors" was partly responsible for this dispensation.

Explaining this further, the Chinese minister said: "In two days of direct talks, trade worth \$20 million was conducted. Though this is a small amount, it is a pointer on the tremendous potential of direct trade between the two countries."

Ms Wu said that a consensus had been reached with the Indian side to increase the number points through which border trade could be carried on between the two countries. She also said that the Chinese government was examining the draft of a proposed agreement to be signed with India on shipping.

India and China have also decided to implement a double taxation avoidance treaty. The treaty would be signed in two months. This would end the need to re-route several trading transactions through Singapore and Hong Kong, officials said.

In another move, the State Bank of India would set up a branch at Shanghai soon. The Reserve Bank of India and the Peoples Bank of China would also sign an agreement on banking. This would take care of problems being faced by Indian businessmen in opening up letters of credit with the Chinese buyers.

India and China have also decided to work out the modalities for establishing direct shipping services. Also, chances of direct air linkages—which have not taken off despite a long standing agreement—have brightened following the perception that such operations would be quite feasible now.

Substance, Outcome of Talks With Cambodians Told

94AS0337A Madras THE HINDU in English
7 Jun 94 p 13

[Article by K. K. Katyal: "Cambodia Seeks Help for Rebuilding Economy"]

[Text] New Delhi, June 6—The Cambodian Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Prince Norodom Sirivut, now here, has sought India's help in building his country's economy, ravaged by war. Apart from inviting Indian companies to bid in international tenders for infrastructural projects, he wanted entrepreneurs from here to set up

textile units. Cambodia, it was clear, would also be interested in India for its defence requirements.

The Prince, brother of King Norodom Sihanouk, who arrived here in the morning for a day's stay, called on the President, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, and the Prime Minister, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao. He and the Minister of State for External Affairs, Mr. R. L. Bhatia, along with their official delegations, examined, at some length, the possibilities of economic cooperation. The cordiality, at the political level, provided the setting for their discussion.

This was the first visit to India of a high-ranking dignitary from Cambodia after the U.N.-supervised elections there. This and the fact that King Sihanouk was one of the six signatories to the NAM [Nonaligned Movement] charter, along with Nehru and Tito in the Fifties (and the only surviving one), gave a symbolic significance to today's talks. At the substantive level, the Cambodian leader acknowledged India's support to the Paris process that helped open a new chapter in his country, and appreciated India's action in sending the second largest contingent to the U.N. force for supervising the elections.

The discussion on the NAM led Mr. Bhatia to explain India's stand against the movement involving itself into contentious bilateral issues. He had just returned from the NAM ministerial meeting at Cairo, which did not accept Pakistan's proposal for setting up a mechanism for sorting out bilateral disputes and, instead, expressed itself in favour of settlement through bilateral negotiations.

The visiting Minister, on his part, outlined the policies of his Government, with special reference to the primacy to the task of establishing peace throughout the country (through talks with Khmer Rouge elements opposed to the new setup, among other things). Peace in Cambodia, according to him, was essential for giving confidence to potential investors. He gave a resume of the enhancement of his country's relations with its neighbours—ASEAN, Vietnam and Laos—while referring to strains with Thailand because of the Khmer Rouge factor.

Trade and investment were the main subject of discussions at the delegation-level talks. Indian parties, according to him, would find the establishment of joint textile units particularly attractive because there were no quota restrictions for Cambodia. Various international agencies, the World Bank, the IMF and the Asian Development Bank, were engaged in financing projects for reconstructing the Cambodian economy and this, said the Prince, provided the Indian companies, with the advantage of their expertise, an opportunity to compete with other international parties.

MoU [Memorandum of Understanding] Signed

The two countries agreed to institutionalise their cooperative efforts through a joint commission and signed a memorandum of understanding in this regard. The two sides, it was clear, would have to think of barter deals, while examining means to promote trade. India was in a position to meet Cambodia's various requirements but the

products that could be given in return would need to be identified. Timber and rubber were two obvious possibilities.

Mukherjee Meets With Russian Deputy Prime Minister

94AS03384 Calcutta THE STATESMAN
in English 8 Jun 94 p 5

[Text] New Delhi, June 7—In a bid to improve bilateral economic cooperation between India and Russia, the two Governments today decided to set up five working groups within the framework of the Indo-Russian inter-governmental commission on trade, economic, scientific and technological cooperation.

The working groups would be set up in the fields of trade and economic cooperation, power and non-conventional energy sources, petroleum, ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy and science and technology.

The decisions were taken at a meeting of the Union Commerce Minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, with the Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Mr. Yuriy F. Yarov, here.

A protocol on the meeting of the commission was signed by Mr. Mukherjee in his capacity as co-chairman.

The two Ministers discussed a broad range of issues during the meeting which related to the present level of bilateral cooperation and the future prospects for its development, particularly in the context of Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao's visit to Russia later this month.

The necessity of further strengthening and diversifying cooperation was stressed by both sides.

The Russian Deputy Prime Minister said the summit between Mr. Rao and the Russian President, Mr. Boris Yeltsin, would open a new chapter in the relations between the two countries, adds a UNI [United News of India] report. There was scope for expanding bilateral relations, he added.

Mr. Yarov said one of the agreements to be signed during the summit would relate to promotion and protection of Russian investment in India. The other agreements would be in the fields of tourism, science and technology, ecology and informatics.

A report from Moscow quoting diplomatic sources said the geopolitical situation in central Asia and Afghanistan would be the focus of discussions during the summit between Mr. Rao and Mr. Yeltsin.

Russian Foreign Ministry sources told the official news agency Itar-Tass that Mr. Rao was expected to get the Kremlin's backing on the Kashmir issue. The differences over the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty would probably not be "dramatized", they said.

Asked about the supply of military spares to India, Mr. Yarov said his Government would honour all the commitments made by the former Soviet Union in cooperation

with other republics of the Commonwealth of Independent States as some of the manufacturing units were located outside Russia.

He said his country would welcome an agreement with India to set up joint ventures to manufacture spare parts for the MiG aircraft which the former Soviet Union had supplied to India and other countries.

Mr Yarov said he was pleased with the results of the inter-governmental commission, which had decided that the annual trade turnover between the two countries should be doubled to Rs [Rupees] 5,000 crores.

Admitting that there were some irritants in promoting bilateral trade—such as the problem of utilization of rupee reserves—he asserted that there would be no let-up in cooperation between the two countries so that other countries could not find a place in trade between them.

Mr Yarov said the next meeting of the inter-governmental commission would take place in September.

Russia Offers Soyuz-30 Fighter, Details Given

94AS0362A Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA* in English
16 Jun 94 p 1

[Names as published]

[Text] New Delhi, June 15—Russia has offered to India a new frontline combat fighter aircraft SU-30, reports UNI [United News of India].

The offer of this state-of-the-art technology fighter has been made by the Irkutsk aircraft production association.

The SU-30 matches in performance with the American F-18 Hornet fighter and European jet fighter Tornado.

The Irkutsk company, which produces the SU-30, claims that it could outmanoeuvre the Mirage 2000 and the F-16.

The most important feature of the SU-30 is its air-to-air refuelling capability which can give the aircraft tremendously extended range.

The SU-30 is provided with advanced navigation equipment and has the unique capabilities to patrol and approach a target in solo and formation flights.

The 30-mm automatic cannon and 10 external stores of missile armament of different types enable the aircraft to effectively hit different air and ground targets.

The SU-30 has a maximum speed of Mach 2.35 and has a radius of action of 1,500 km. It can carry 8,000 kg of bomb load including the GSH-301 calibre cannon. The maximum take-off load weight of the aircraft is 33,500 kg and it has a ceiling of 15,500 metres.

The in-flight refuelling capability of the SU-30 considerably increase the time of patrolling and the range of the aircraft.

The SU-30, which is only operational with the Russian air force, was once flown non-stop for 13,440 km with several in-flight refuellings.

The Indian Air Force is now evaluating the SU-30, before entering into an advanced stage of negotiations with Russia.

The Russian offer is for outright sale of 20 fighter aircraft and they have proposed that with modifications in the assembly line at the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) units where the MiG-27 was produced, the SU-30 could also be mass produced under licence.

The SU-30 is an improved version of the SU-27 which was also produced by the Irkutsk aircraft production association. The SU-27 has already been supplied by Russia to China.

The aircraft has been offered on commercial credit by the Russian company.

Papers Report on Relations With Israel

Memoranda of Understanding

94AS0354A Hyderabad *DECCAN CHRONICLE*
in English 23 Jun 94 p 1

[Text] Jerusalem, June 22—The Human Resource Development Minister, Mr Arjun Singh, today concluded his visit to Israel on a positive note with the two countries signing three Memorandums of Understanding in the fields of education and culture.

Mr Singh held discussions with Israeli Prime Minister, Mr Yitzhaq Rabin and discussed strengthening of bilateral relations between the two countries.

The three memorandums signed are between the Israeli Academy of Sciences and Humanities and University Grants Commission, the Bar Lian University at Tel Aviv and the University of Hyderabad, Tel Aviv University's Shirley and Leslie Porter School and the Banaras Hindu University.

The signing of the memorandums would promote interaction between the academic communities of the two countries and would promote opportunities to exchange of university teachers, researchers, scholars particularly in the field of philosophy and scientific research. The two sides also agreed to undertake exchanges of youths and sports delegation and exchange of exhibitions.

It was felt that the development of these relations was satisfactorily resulting in intensified contacts at the government and business levels.

During his meeting with Mr Singh, the Israeli Prime Minister, Mr Rabin, expressed happiness over the growing relations between the two countries since the normalisation of diplomatic ties in 1992.

The minister also met the Israeli President, Mr Ezer Weizman, the Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, Mr Shim'on Peres, apart from his host the Minister of Education and Culture, Prof Amon Rubinstein.

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Mr Arjun Singh, who is on an official visit to Israel, conveyed to the Palestinian leader, Mr Yasser Arafat, a message of goodwill from the Prime Minister, Mr Narasimha Rao.

He also met Mr Faysal Husayni (formerly head of the Palestinian delegation at the Washington peace talks).

He said that India's commitment to Palestinian aspirations was firm. Mr Singh also assured India's pledge of one million dollars to the Palestinian development projects.

Growth in Trade

94AS0354B Calcutta *THE STATESMAN* in English
11 Jun 94 p 12

[Text] Jerusalem, June 10—Indo-Israel trade this year is expected to touch the \$500 million-mark, according to sources here, reports PTI [Press Trust of India].

There was a 140-percent growth in the bilateral trade in the two years since the two countries normalized relations in January 1992. Last year, the two-way trade amounted to \$340 million. This year, the sources said, it could approximate \$500 million.

Last year, for example, Indian exports to Israel amounted to \$129 million, while India's imports from the country was close to \$214 million, thanks mostly to Indian demand for Israeli agro-chemical products.

This year, Israel will start importing Maruti cars and Tata minivans. Agreements have been signed for the first shipment of both the Indian-made automobiles.

Later this year, at least 100 Maruti cars should hit Israeli roads. Tata vans are also to make their Israeli debut this year. The agreements initially are for three years.

The Indian Ambassador, Mr P. K. Singh, says Indo-Israeli trade has, in the past two years, built up its own momentum.

The two countries have already signed a trade agreement each giving the other the most-favoured nation status. Also, an investment guarantee agreement is in the making.

On the Indian side, some of the State Governments have already taken the initiative in trade and joint ventures.

The Union Human Resources Development Minister, Mr Arjun Singh, is to come here on June 19 for a four-day official visit. He is scheduled to meet both the President and the Prime Minister of Israel, besides other Ministers and leaders.

Minister Assures PLO of India's Support

94AS0355A Hyderabad *DECCAN CHRONICLE*
in English 23 Jun 94 p 12

[Text] Jerusalem, June 22 (PTI [Press Trust of India])—The visiting Indian Human Resources Minister, Mr Arjun Singh, went off his official programme on Tuesday driving

to the Orient House in East Jerusalem to meet the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman, Mr Yasir 'Arafat's followers and assure them that India backed their aspirations as before.

The Orient House is the headquarters for the Palestinians in the eastern part of Jerusalem that Israel annexed following the 1967 Arab-Israeli War.

All the top Palestinian figures at the Orient House were overwhelmed by the Indian Minister's hurriedly arranged visit. They presented to him their position on Jerusalem and claimed the city's future could not be unilaterally decided by Israel.

Under the Oslo peace accord last year, Jerusalem is on the agenda for the talks that are to begin two years from now for the final settlement of the Israel-Palestine dispute. Israel has stuck to its contention that Jerusalem can no longer be divided and that the present united Jerusalem would remain the capital of Israel for all time to come.

The minister's visit to the Orient House was outside his official programme. But it was not without the knowledge of the Israeli Government.

Mr Arjun Singh told the Palestinian committee members involved with economic development that India's commitment to the Palestinian aspirations was firm and repeated India's pledge of \$1 million to the Palestine development projects.

He also invited a delegation of the Palestinian development experts to visit India and discuss projects India could help. India, Mr Arjun Singh said, was ready to set up a development training centre for Palestine.

He also conveyed to Mr Arafat through his supporters the Prime Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao's message of goodwill.

Mr Singh told the Palestinian officials that peace talks must go on to achieve the final goal.

Ground War Capability Compared With Pakistan

94AS0343A Hyderabad *DECCAN CHRONICLE*
in English 10 Jun 94 p 10

[Article by Pravin Sawhney: "In a Ground War, India and Pak Are Even"]

[Text] New Delhi, June 9—In a limited duration, high wastage conventional war, the existing military capabilities of India and Pakistan are matched on the ground. A myth has been perpetrated over the years by Islamabad and swallowed by Washington—as it strategically suited the United States to favour Islamabad during the Cold War and now as a bridge to the turbulent Islamic nations in West Asia—that the military balance has always been tilted in favour of India. This assessment has been based on comparative strengths of the two standing armies and bean counting of the existing weapons and equipment with

the two defence forces. It does not take into account the employment of the two armies and the state of the weaponry with the two countries.

The 1.1 million strength of the Indian army is divided into eleven corps, namely, 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 11, 12, 15, 16, 21 and 33. Most corps have three divisions, making a total of 36 divisions (each division has between 12,000 to 15,000 troops).

The divisions are classified according to their roles. Their doctrines [as published], training and weapons are imparted according to their specialised roles, which is largely dictated by the terrain. For instance, there are a total of 14 infantry divisions for the plains, deserts, and semi-mountainous terrains, nine mountain divisions and three specialised divisions (18, 24 and 14), which are called the Reorganised Army Plains Divisions [RAPIDS]. The RAPIDS, which form part of the army headquarters reserves, have an infantry brigade (each division generally has two to three brigades) replaced by a mechanised brigade for mobility.

Besides the 36 divisions, the army has seven independent armoured brigades, five independent artillery brigades, two air defence groups, six independent air defence brigades, three signal groups, 10 squadrons of aviation corps and the support elements of the services and ordnance corps for the logistics back-up.

Of the total of 36 divisions, 12 divisions are on the holding role, implying that they have taken a defence posture all along the border with Pakistan, 14 divisions make up the army reserves and the offensive elements and 9 mountain divisions are deployed in the north and east against the Chinese border.

Three aspects of the army manpower are noteworthy. First, in a limited duration war, either in the west with Pakistan or in the east and north with China, shifting of divisions will not be feasible. This implies that the 9 mountain divisions against the Chinese will not be available to the west during a limited war. It is because the weapons conversion from mountain to infantry divisions and the troops acclimatisation and training requires a minimum of two months. Things will be more difficult if the infantry divisions are converted into mountain divisions. The troops will need rigorous personnel acclimatisation beyond heights of 2,700 metres. Most of the army pickets in the north and Arunachal Pradesh are above this height level.

Therefore, even while the army headquarters have plans to shift, at least three divisions (20, 21 and 23) from the Chinese front to the west against Pakistan, it is a counter-productive contingency. Senior army officers are not willing to count upon these formations being available for war with Pakistan.

Second, of the 14 divisions that make up the army reserves and the offensive elements, only 9 divisions are offensive forces. The remaining are in peace locations spread in

central India. The 9 offensive divisions are grouped under the three strike corps, namely 1, 2 and 21, which will take the battle inside Pakistan.

Third, large amounts of the army reserves and the mountain divisions have been on internal security duties since the eruption of the insurgency in Kashmir in 1990. These formations which have not been trained for war since years, will prove an embarrassment if used against Pakistan. For instance, 8 and 28 mountain divisions have been on counter-insurgency duties in Kashmir since 1991 and 1992 respectively. Large amount of army reserves were employed in the Punjab to curb militancy during 1987 to 1991. On the contrary, the Pakistani army has devoted itself to professional training in the post-Zia period since 1988.

A simple counting of formations gives a total of only 9 army divisions with India for offensive operations. Pakistan also has a total of 9 divisions for its offensive operations against India. When Pakistan shifts a bulk of its forces in 11 and 12 corps to Peshawar and Quetta, presently against Afghanistan, there will be a virtual parity of forces in terms of infantry, armour and artillery between the two armies.

The only edge that Indian army has over Pakistan is in more numbers of independent brigades and engineer capability. The Pakistani army has a small lead in signals and electronic warfare equipment.

Even while both armies have an equal number of large troops in a defensive posture in ditch-cum-bound and canal obstacles along the border, Indian troops suffer certain disadvantages.

Because of the relatively free cross-border movement by the Punjab militants during 1985 to 1991 into Punjab and Rajasthan, the Pakistani army is certain to have comprehensive details on the Indian defences and their layouts. While various means of reconnaissance, like air and satellite systems are available to both countries, it can not match the unrivalled information collected through human intelligence methods.

With a near parity in troops between the two countries the decisive elements for an operational battle will be the employment and timings of the strike formations. Pakistan, with an advantage of its geography, can muster its offensive formations much faster than India, whose offensive elements are spread over the country. For instance, Indian-54 infantry division is stationed at Hyderabad.

A major problem faced by both armies is that the two-third of the army, which has adopted a defensive posture along the border has a siege and a defensive mentality. Although troops on defensive roles are rotated every three years, the conservative thinking, bereft of offensive action, sticks with the troops. For this reason, during the 1965 and the 1971 war, divisional commanders are known to have handed over their battles to the corps commanders at the first breach of obstacles by the Pakistani troops. This is a

dangerous trend which has stayed even today, and is invariably noticed in peace-time war gamings.

To ensure that the troops do not develop a permanent defensive outlook, army headquarters is toying with the idea of substituting the adopted defence posture along the border with large mechanised forces held in the rear. These forces, which will be held in the theatre, will be small on numbers compared to the present holding formations but will retain massive punch. The forward line will be manned by light screening forces. The additional burden in such a deployment will be on operational logistics which will increase manifold to support the mechanised forces.

The idea is feasible only if the political directive which instructs that no quarters can be given in Punjab and southern Kashmir is revised.

Equipment

Certain issues need to be highlighted to put the bean countings into perspective.

Armour: Total armour regiments which will be available to India for war will not exceed 47 regiments, though the effective strength of tanks is 2,600, which is 59 regiments. This includes the war wastage rates and training tanks. Pakistan has 37 regiments with 45 tanks each, excluding their war wastage rates and training tanks.

The 900 Vijayanta tanks remaining with the Indian army of a total of 1,900 tanks are no more than static pill-boxes due to persisting mobility problems. Moreover, their armour cannot stand up to any kind of modern anti-tank ammunition. Poor protection implies that the Vijayantas have to seek cover in the folds of the ground.

Pakistan has a lead over India in providing passive sights for day and night firing and simplified fire control systems. Pakistan indigenously produces 100mm APDS, 105mm APDS/APFSDS, HESH and HEAT main gun ammunition.

Moreover, a specific unit called the reconnaissance and support battalion gives an edge to Pakistan mobile columns.

Artillery: India has a total of 155 artillery regiments against Pakistan's approximate 115 regiments excluding war wastage reserves and training guns.

Pakistani artillery has lead over India with their 250 self-propelled guns of 105mm, 155mm, and 203mm calibres. India has five regiments of 105mm and 130mm self-propelled guns, which because of maintenance problems, are an apology than an asset.

Pakistan, in terms of force multipliers have inducted FADAC type fire directing system combined with radio sound ballistic meteorological data gathering for speed and accuracy in firing. They have the US ANTPQ-36 and ANTPQ-37, gun and mortar locating radars. In short, Pakistani artillery is more than adequate to equip 20 infantry divisions, 2 armoured divisions, 9 corps artillery brigades and four independent artillery brigades. Their

only weak spot is the artillery with 10 corps which looks after the Pakistan Occupied Kashmir and northern areas.

Pakistan has all rotary aviation under their army aviation corps, unlike India where the air force is adamant not to part with attack and lift helicopters.

Air Forces: Though the Indian air force has a total of 38 fighter squadrons as against 22 squadrons with Pakistan, not more than 32 Indian squadrons will be fit to enter combat.

Pakistan has invested heavily in precision guided munitions and electronic warfare pods. In terms of trained pilots, the Pakistani air force is surplus.

—From The Asian Age

Human Rights Officials on Situation in Kashmir

94AS0336A Calcutta THE STATESMAN
in English 7 Jun 94 p 5

[Names as published]

[Text] Srinagar, June 6—The Chairman of the National Human Rights Commission, Mr Ranganath Mishra, said today that the human rights situation in Kashmir Valley was "serious" and called for immediate measures to rectify the grievances of those suffering, report UNI and PTI.

Talking to reporters here, the former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court said that during its two-day visit to the valley, the members of the commission received around 20 complaints of human rights abuses, including custodial deaths and reports of missing persons.

Mr Mishra said the most common complaint pertained to people missing after being picked up by the security forces during raids and search operations. He said such cases would be referred to the State authorities for verification before action was taken.

Asked whether the team had met members of the All-Party Hurriyat Conference—an umbrella group of 34 organizations—and the Kashmir Bar Association, Mr Mishra claimed that invitations through a special letter met with no response.

In Srinagar, the commission members met the Governor, General (Retd) K. V. Krishna Rao, and activists of the National Conference, the Congress(I), the CPI(M) [Communist Party of India-Marxist], the CPI [Communist Party of India] and the Janata Dal.

Mr Mishra said the team visited several interrogation centres in the valley, including "PAPA-II" and Hari Nivas in Srinagar, and met around 25 detainees, including Javed Ahmed Mir, acting president of the JKLF [Jammu Kashmir Liberation Front].

He said reports had been sought from the State Government regarding 14 complaints received by the commission before the fact-finding trip. He added that the report on the Kupwara incident of last January was expected to be received from the Government tomorrow.

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The Chairman denied charges that the Commission was being guided by the State Government and said: "We are an independent body and fix our schedule on our own."

The members of the commission, including a former Supreme Court Judge, Mrs Fatima Beevi, a former Chief Justice of the Jammu and Kashmir High Court, Mr S. S. Kang, and Mr Varindra Dayal, a retired Central Government official, will also make a two-day visit to Jammu.

During their stay there, they will visit migrant camps and meet members of the Bar Association and activists of various political parties.

In Jammu, the leaders of Panun Kashmir, an organization of displaced Kashmiri Hindus, today called on national political parties to develop effective political responses to the problems in Kashmir.

Addressing a press conference here, a spokesman of the organization, Mr Ajay Changroo, said the seriousness of the Dida situation should not be measured only in terms of violence levels and the exodus of Hindu families to Chamba district in Himachal Pradesh.

Meanwhile, violence in the valley continued as Army troops shot dead three suspected militants—including two said to be foreigners—and arrested 13 others in operations since yesterday evening.

A Defence Ministry spokesman said here today that two suspected foreign militants were killed in an encounter with troops in Shopian village in the Pulwama district of south Kashmir last evening.

Six people suspected of belonging to the outlawed Al-Jehad, the Muslim Janbaz Force and the Hizbul Mujahideen were arrested by security personnel during searches in Pulwama district.

Kashmir Liberation Front Issues Statement

94AS0361A Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 23 Jun 94 p 9

[Text] Jammu, June 22 (UNI [United News of India])—Pro-independence banned outfit, Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), has admitted that the atrocities committed by the militants have alienated the people from Jihad movement and warned that it would take strict action against erring elements.

In a statement in the local press in Srinagar recently, the JKLF admitted that militancy had made people's life miserable in Kashmir and there was growing public resentment against militants. "Though the people were not expressing their resentment openly, they had made their views known to every one in private," it said.

In a hard-hitting statement, the spokesman of the JKLF said that the movement had suffered and widespread destruction has been caused by "elements from within and not from outside". He said such elements had indulged in large scale extortions and criminal activities.

The JKLF supreme council also stressed the need for immediately checking the "movement" which had been reduced to sucking the blood of the people in the name of freedom movement.

Sensing the general mood of the people on forced donations, the JKLF has imposed a ban on donations to any political or militant organisations from June. It has also banned extortions from any officer, businessmen or any individual, including fines imposed on contractors, engineers and shopkeepers.

Militants have been resorting to extortions on every possible pretext. Following the success of the security forces in seizing huge quantity of arms and ammunition, the militants collected donations and resorted to extortions on the pretext of purchasing weapons for Jihad. They are also forcing the people to donate for one trust or the other.

Seized of this problem, the JKLF has also imposed a ban on such activities. It has threatened to take action against such militants irrespective of their affiliation to any group.

Meanwhile, the inter-group clashes continue to rock the Valley notwithstanding the unity moves of the Hurriyat Conference.

The pro-Pakistan Hizbul Mujahideen in a press statement that accused JKLF gunmen of firing on their two activists, injuring one of them critically. It said its section commander, Mr Asghar Rathore, was shot dead by Muslim Mujahideen at Nihalpora Pattan.

People's League also said its active member of Baramulla, Ghulam Hassan Gania alias Sarvar was killed by some militant outfit. It alleged that two of its activists were held as hostages by a militant group.

Pakistani troops fired two rockets and opened unprovoked firing on Indian positions while five people, including three CPI-M workers, were killed and 19, mostly security-men, [as published]

Delegate to International Labor Meet States Policy

94AS0340A Madras THE HINDU in English
9 Jun 94 p 14

[Text] Geneva, June 8—India has reiterated its commitment to eliminate child labour but rejected the suggestion for a levy on world trade through the World Trade Organisation to achieve the goal.

India has joined the international programme for elimination of child labour not necessarily for the funds involved in assistance which we can mobilise ourselves, but for demonstrating our dedication, transparency and sincerity of purpose in our mission against child labour, the Labour Minister, Mr. P. A. Sangma said in his address to the International Labour Conference [ILO] here last night.

More stable and credible budgeting by the ILO would help in facilitating a great initial thrust for this mission, he said.

"We, however, do not subscribe to the suggestion that a levy be imposed on world trade through the WTO for this purpose," Mr. Sangma said.

Describing the international programme for elimination of child labour as "the most empathetic action programme undertaken by the ILO in recent years," Mr. Sangma said a large number of non-Government organisations in India had committed themselves to implementing projects in this area.

Compliance With Labour Standards

Spelling out India's stand on the use of international trade as leverage for securing compliance with labour standards, Mr. Sangma said while India was strongly committed to internationally recognised labour standards, it did not see any merit in the attempt to force linkages where they did not exist.

For the very same reason, "we see no need for a declaration of a programme of action or a new international convention on this matter," Mr. Sangma said.

Trade-triggered compulsory equalisation of costs in the name of labour standards could only result in the denial of the very opportunities for development expected to be opened by freer world trade, he said.

The threat of trade sanctions to force labour standards would, in fact, significantly inhibit their ratification, Mr. Sangma said.

Stating that the role of the ILO in the mission against child labour was one of spearheading action, Mr. Sangma said there were also limits to ILO's capacity to provide resources in the context of zero rate of budget growth and of competing demands from various countries.

"Nonetheless, activity of this nature is not a mere programme. It is a campaign, a movement. In cases like this, at least in the medium term period, there must be flow of funds consistent with commitments," the Minister said.

Economic and structural reforms and the interplay of market forces resulted in the lowering of production costs through competition. In the process, often labour suffered, Mr. Sangma said.

Economic Reforms

Manpower redundancies and job losses occurred in the reorganised enterprises, though, increased production and productivity might give rise to increased employment opportunities, he said. Referring to the economic reforms initiated by India, Mr. Sangma recalled that the Prime Minister, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, had made it clear that millions of people would not be thrown out of jobs overnight merely because the Government needed a particular change.

The Prime Minister had said "We have to find solutions which involve reforms, certainly, but which are also humane. In India, we call it reform with a human face."

Welcoming the installation of a non-racial Government in South Africa headed by its President, Mr. Nelson Mandela, Mr. Sangma said it also marked the successful culmination of the 30-year campaign of the ILO against apartheid.

"This occasion is of special emotional significance to use because of the pioneering struggle against apartheid by Mahatma Gandhi," Mr. Sangma said.

Faith in ILO

Mr. Sangma said he had immense faith in the ILO's supervisory machinery to monitor the application of labour standards which had been built on tripartite foundations. Mr. Sangma cautioned that any other mechanism that might be forced for monitoring and enforcing labour protection, involving outside international players such as the WTO could, unintendedly become an instrument of coercion over a period of time.

Referring to the world labour report 1994, Mr. Sangma said that it presented a rather depressing picture of the employment scenario.

"Formal sector jobs are being lost round the world; labour supply has been expanding; there is an addition of 43 million job seekers to the world labour force annually mostly in the developing countries," Mr. Sangma said.

CPI-M Politburo Meets, Outcome Reported

94AS0335A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA
in English 7 Jun 94 p 15

[Text] New Delhi, June 6 (PTI [Press Trust of India])—In a significant political development, the CPM [Communist Part of India-Marxist] today made it clear that it would support the constitution amendment bill only if the government changes the mode of appointment of election commissioners to ensure its independence and drops the proposed amendment regarding the Rajya Sabha elections.

The categorical declaration by the CPM after a two-day politbureau meeting here today sets at rest speculations about rethinking in the party on its support to statute amendment in the wake of meetings between the chief election commissioner, Mr T. N. Seshan, and the West Bengal chief minister, Mr Jyoti Basu.

"The politbureau decided that it cannot support an arrangement where the election commissioners are appointed purely at the behest of the government which can detract from their independent constitutional status.

"The politbureau of the CPM decided therefore that it will support the bill for setting up the multi-member commission only if the mode of appointment of the election commissioners is changed and its independence ensured," said a statement released by the party general secretary, Mr Harkishen Singh Surjeet at a press conference here today.

The politbureau also reiterated its strong and total opposition to the amendment in the Representation of the People Act.

CPI-M Explains Opposition to GATT

94AS0339A Madras THE HINDU
in English 9 Jun 94 p 16

[Names as published]

[Text] New Delhi, June 8—After having organised a round of protests against the new General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade [GATT] regime, which culminated in a battle of sorts with the Delhi Police on April 5, the Communist Party of India-Marxist [CPI(M)] seems to have entered into a war of words with the Government. Contrary to the campaign conducted hitherto by the Opposition where some of their arguments were bordering on absurdities, the CPI(M) appears to present some researched arguments on the subject.

Again, as part of preparation to the nationwide civil disobedience movement that the party proposes to lead, the effort now seems to be to distinguish the Left from the anti-GATT slogans raised by the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh [RSS] (organization of service to the nation) and its parivar.

By linking up the clauses of the new GATT treaty with the liberalisation programme embarked upon by the Government in the mid-Eighties, the pamphlet indicates the new agenda for the CPI(M), laying stress on the "struggle of the Indian people," as distinct from the stress laid hitherto on the concept of "class based mobilisation."

"A Compromise"

In a lengthy pamphlet, essentially meant for "educating the party cadres" the CPI(M) Politburo member, Mr. Sitaram Yechury, rebutted point by point the arguments presented by those supporting the Dunkel text. After a brief summary of what the GATT is all about, the basic argument in the pamphlet is that "the path embarked upon by the new economic policies compromise, India's strength to negotiate a more equitable deal."

In other words, if Mr. Yechury's arguments are to be followed, then the Government's signing the GATT agreement at Marrakesh was merely a logical culmination of its liberalisation programme formally initiated in July 1991.

Quoting From Indira Gandhi

Titled as "GATT-94: A Blue Print for Economic Recolonisation," the pamphlet begins with a cryptic comment on the Bharatiya Janata Party's [BJP's] opposition to GATT, accusing the party of merely attempting "to capitalise on the growing popular discontent." Poking at those who argue that "There is no alternative," the document quotes extensively from none other than its staunchest enemy of yesteryear, Indira Gandhi.

Citing briefly the opposition by India to the inclusion of services and Intellectual Property Rights in the GATT survey when the Uruguay rounds began in 1986, the pamphlet compliments Indira Gandhi, whose ideas were the basis of the stand taken at Punta Del Este, Uruguay.

It quotes Indira Gandhi's speech at the World Health Assembly at Geneva in 1981, stating, "My idea of a better world is one in which medical discoveries would be free of patents and there will be no profiteering from life and death."

Tracing the import of this speech through the Uruguay rounds, which at one point of time witnessed the rallying of many a third world nation behind India, the document concludes that the volte-face by India's representative at the official level negotiation in April 1989, where India conceded the demand for inclusion of IPR in the GATT negotiations, was "a capitulation due to the compulsions of the new economic policies being implemented domestically."

"Farm Prices May Rise"

Contesting the Government's claims that the section dealing with curtailing agriculture subsidies to a maximum of 10 percent of the value of output will not affect subsidies, the pamphlet fears just that with all possibilities of a substantial increase in cost of agriculture production. It cites from the Planning Commission estimates that "if (the cost of) subsidised electricity provided to agriculture is raised from 48 paise to 98 paise per unit it will lead to an increase of 25 percent in the price of foodgrains." Just by this alone, the Government will have to withdraw subsidies, given the condition of the new GATT regulation, affecting the Public Distribution System, the pamphlet argues.

A shift in cultivation patterns—from food-crops to cash crops—thanks to the stress to export, according to the pamphlet, will "revive the spectre of famine in the country." Dismissing arguments that "this was only an alarmist scenario," the recent shortage in sugar and the prevalence of famine situation in certain parts of the country is being cited by the pamphlet as substantiating its arguments.

However, arguments apart, the CPI(M) appears to be at a loss on what exactly is the demand it placed before the Government. There is hardly any mention throughout the pamphlet where it says that India should get out of the newly constituted WTO [World Trade Organization]. The effort appears to raise doubts on whether the BJP will really oppose the changes in the patent laws when introduced in Parliament.

Papers Report Congress(I) Working Committee Meets

Poll Dates, New Agenda

94AS0342A Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE
in English 10 Jun 94 pp 1, 5

[Article by P. A. Rama Rao: "CWC (Congress Working Committee) Sets New Agenda"]

[Text] New Delhi, June 9—Empowering the Congress president, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, to constitute the Central Election Committee (CEC), finalisation of the party organisational election programme, approval of the

agenda for the two-day All-India Congress Committee (AICC) meeting commencing on Friday, are among the decisions taken by the Congress Working Committee (CWC) on Thursday.

During its three-and-a-half hour meeting here, the CWC decided to extend the time for enrollment of membership up to December 31, 1994, from the earlier deadline of June 30.

While elections to Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) office-bearers and AICC members would be completed by June 11, 1995, the programme for election of the Congress president would be announced later. The date for election would be dependent on the plenary session.

Meanwhile, the stage is set at the Talkatora stadium, here, for the AICC meeting, which is going to be a smooth affair, in the absence of elections and dissident activity. The main thoroughfares of the Capital have been decked up with huge cut-outs of former Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi and those of Mr Rao, apart from welcome arches, bunting and the party flag.

The CWC has cleared five resolutions for discussion and adoption at the AICC meeting. Apart from the political, economic, international, and Panchayati Raj resolutions, a resolution on the 125th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi would also be adopted.

While the focus of the four resolutions would be on the coming Assembly elections in 10 States, the strategy to be adopted by the party to face the elections would not form part of the AICC deliberations. The strategy would be formulated later by the CWC, the highest policy-making body.

The dual thrust of the political resolution would be on fighting the forces of communalism and the Sangh Parivar, and on maintaining the unity and integrity of the country. The economic resolution would naturally hit out at the Opposition parties for their "motivated propaganda" against the Dunkel proposals.

The achievements of the Narasimha Rao government during the past three years would be highlighted during the discussion on the four resolutions. Similarly, the economic resolution asserts that the last November Assembly elections and the recent byelections in different States is a clear mandate of the people for the new economic policy of the government.

The session would start at 8:30 am with flag hoisting by the party president. This would be followed by "Vande mataram" and then welcome address by the chairman of the reception committee, Mr H. K. L. Bhagat. Condolence resolutions and confirmation of the minutes of the last AICC meeting in March 1993 would follow. After the opening remarks by Mr Rao, the political resolution would be taken up for discussion first.

On the first day of the session, the Congress president would meet the AICC members and delegates from each State going to polls within the next one year, including

Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Goa. All the partymen from each State would meet him in one group and not in separate groups. This would probably prevent the warring groups from each State from levelling accusations against each other, though the possibility of delegates from each State expressing divergent views was not ruled out.

The AICC spokesman, Mr V. N. Gadgil, who briefed newsmen at the end of the CWC meeting, said that the CWC considered many items of the agenda, one of them being extension of membership enrollment time and the schedule for organisational elections.

The last date for enrollment of members was extended up to December 31, 1994. The following is the programme for organisational elections: Last date for depositing membership books with the District Congress Committees (DCCs)—March 15, 1995; publication of draft roll of primary and active members—March 22, 1995; last date for filing objections before district scrutiny committee—March 29; last date for disposal of objections by the district scrutiny committee—April 14; last date for filing appeals before the Pradesh scrutiny committee—April 24; date for disposal of appeals by the Pradesh scrutiny committee—May 1; last date for filing appeals before the AICC—May 8; last date for disposal of appeals by the AICC—May 15; publication of final rolls and appointment of district returning officers by the Pradesh returning officers—May 25; election of office-bearers of primary units and delegates to Block Congress Committees (BCCs) by each primary unit—June 2; declaration of results and issue of identity cards to presidents of primary units and delegates to BCCs—June 4; election of four DCC [District Congress Committee] members and one PCC member by each block, issue of identity cards to DCC and PCC members and election of BCC [Block Congress Committee] office-bearers and executive—June 7; election of DCC office-bearers and executive—June 8; election of PCC office-bearers and executive and AICC members—June 11, 1995.

On the constitution of the CEC of the party, the CWC felt that the resolution already adopted by it on the eve of the last November Assembly elections authorising the Congress president to constitute the CEC would continue to have validity.

This means that Mr Rao has the choice either to continue the CEC earlier constituted or to set up a fresh committee for the ensuing Assembly elections, Mr Gadgil explained.

Replying to questions, the Congress spokesman said that the political resolution dealt with minorities, electoral reforms and other issues. It also condemned the denigration of Mahatma Gandhi by the Bahujan Samaj Party [BSP] leader, Ms Mayawati.

Asked whether the decision of the CWC extending its term would be ratified by the AICC, Mr Gadgil replied that the matter did not figure at the meeting.

Mr Gadgil said all the five draft resolutions were read para by para at the meeting and later approved with slight amendments.

Asked who would propose and second each of the five resolutions, the spokesman said "No decision has been taken in this regard so far."

On whether the controversial electoral reforms Bills, proposed to be introduced in the special session of Parliament on June 13, figured at the meeting, the spokesman did not give a direct reply, but said, "there is a para on electoral reforms in the political resolution."

He said a condolence resolution would also be moved at the AICC meeting with a special mention of the former Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister and Union minister, K. Brahmananda Reddy who died recently. He said the Prime Minister, at the CWC meeting, recalled his fond association with Reddy. The Prime Minister also talked about the resolution on Mahatma Gandhi.

The spokesman said the CWC also considered the issue of contributions to party funds by active members. In this regard, he said the earlier CWC had formed a committee, under the chairmanship of the Union Human Resource Development Minister, Mr Arjun Singh, to suggest how funds could be raised. The earlier rule, he said, was that every active member contribute Re 1 per month to the party fund if his or her income is less than Rs [Rupees] 500 per month. Those earning more than Rs 500 could contribute one per cent of their income.

He said the Arjun Singh committee suggested that every active member contribute Rs 50 per year to the party fund. Those holding elected or appointed office in the party should contribute five per cent of their total income.

The CWC considered the recommendations but felt that the party constitution would have to be amended for implementing them. But for any change in the party constitution, one month notice before the AICC session was mandatory. Therefore, the constitution would be amended accordingly at the next AICC session. Meanwhile, the CWC decided to prescribe a form to those who could pay one per cent of their income to become an active member of the party or to those who were interested in renewing their membership.

The Union Minister for Welfare, Mr Sitaram Kesri, who is unwell, and the Union Minister for Civil Aviation, Mr Ghulam Nabi Azad, who is abroad, were the only absentees. The special invitees, who attended the meeting were, Mr S. B. Chavan, Mr V. C. Shukla, Mr B. Shankaranand, Mr Pranab Mukherjee and Mr G. Venkataswamy, all ministers.

Analyst's Comment

94AS0342B Madras THE HINDU in English
10 Jun 94 p 13

[Commentary by K. K. Katyal: "Cong. Poll Time-Table a Surprise"]

[Text] New Delhi, June 9—Two conflicting pointers were available today about the style of the Prime Minister and the Congress(I) president, Mr. P. V. Narasimha Rao, in conducting the organisational affairs—recourse to inner party democracy, on the one hand, and continued ad hocism, on the other. Both were significant, symbolically as also in the substantive context.

This was the meaning of the two steps taken by the Congress(I) Working Committee—the announcement of the schedule of the organisational poll and the decision to continue the existing ad hoc arrangement for the work that, according to the party constitution, is to be entrusted to a duly-chosen Central Election Committee.

The announcement of the time-table for the internal election was a surprise—as party members had reconciled themselves to the continuance of the present order till after the next Lok Sabha poll, due in the first half of 1996. This perception was based on what happened earlier this year when, instead of holding fresh organisational poll, Mr. Rao was authorised to revamp the party committees (while taking care that the status of the All-India Congress Committee [AICC] members and Pradesh Congress Committee delegates was not affected). The decision was taken 10 days before the term of the committees, chosen two years ago, was due to expire.

There was no ambiguity about the rationale of the decision provided by a specially-constituted action plan committee. It wanted the party elections to be put off "for the time being". It referred to the two lots of assembly elections—one due in October and other early next year—"to be followed by the Lok Sabha poll" and advised against holding the organisational elections "at this juncture". This, naturally, was taken to mean that the internal elections were as good as postponed till after the next Lok Sabha poll.

Today's decision belied that impression. The party elections are to be completed by November 11 next year, with the result that new committees and office-bearers would be in position well before the 1996 Lok Sabha election though the poll in the 10 Assemblies would be gone through, under the present dispensation. The inner-party democracy had not been given up indefinitely in favour of "democratic centralism" (the words used by senior Congress leaders during Indira Gandhi's tenure as Prime Minister and party president in their enthusiastic defence of her nomination raj).

The democratic winds are, however, not to blow immediately. The AICC members are not to be required to choose a new Central Election Committee, charged with the key job of finalising the choice of party candidates for the Assembly and the Lok Sabha poll. On the eve of the last Assembly elections the entire Working Committee was converted into the Central Election Committee. This arrangement will continue. The choice of the candidates for the 10 assemblies will be the responsibility of the Working Committee members acting in a different capacity. This is one part of ad hocism. The other is

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represented by the plan for the re-organisation of the existing Pradesh Congress Committees, especially in the States which are due to have Assembly poll.

This process was initiated soon after the announcement of the revamp decision in early April. Central observers had already gone to these States, assessed the situation and submitted their reports to Mr. Rao. His decision was expected earlier. The delay has only generated uncertainty among the present Pradesh committees and their office-bearers.

What are the reasons behind the two approaches is not clear. Perhaps, Mr. Rao, while not taking any "electoral" chances in the immediate context, wanted to avoid conveying the message that he was casting himself into the mould of a dictator.

Papers Give Details of Congress Committee Session

Rao 10 Jun Speech

94AS0351A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English
11 Jun 94 pp 1, 13

[Text] The Times of India News Service and agencies, New Delhi, June 10—The All-India Congress Committee (AICC) session began here today with a clarion call by the party president and the Prime Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, to all Congressmen to devise a comprehensive and broad-based political programme and strategy to meet the growing challenge of casteist politics in the country.

In his opening remarks at the two-day session, the Prime Minister called for a mid-term appraisal of his government and said the AICC was meeting at a crucial period when partymen had to ponder over the mistakes of the past to draw appropriate lessons for preparing a blue-print for future course of action. Many serious challenges faced the party now, he added.

The session is being attended by chief ministers of all the Congress-ruled states besides 880 AICC delegates, party MPs [members of Parliament] and several hundred special invitees. Ms Sonia Gandhi, widow of the former Congress president and prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi, broke her self-imposed aloofness and specially came to watch the proceedings. She was seated in the VIP enclosure.

Decrying the tendency to associate political parties with castes, the Prime Minister said the Congress could not be identified with any casteist group or religion. The Congressmen might indulge in casteism occasionally, but the party's basic character was not casteist. The very nature of Congress was anti-casteist. Now the party had to search for mechanism that would overlay caste politics.

The Prime Minister said there was no reason for any Congressmen or for anybody else to feel despondent. The party had not deviated from the path guidelines for which were laid down Nehru and Rajiv. So long as the Congress

was guiding the nation's destiny there was no question of the country suffering any setback on the national or international front.

However, the Prime Minister warned, that if decisions taken by the party were not in the best interests of the country, the people would never forgive them. In an obvious reference to brief tenures of power enjoyed by the Janata Dal and the Janata Dal faction governments, Mr Rao said these governments were voted out by the people because of their poor performance. Every Congressman must remember that the people as they had demonstrated in the past were absolutely merciless in rejecting parties which had failed to uphold their interests.

The Prime Minister made a special reference to the reverses suffered by the party in U.P. [Uttar Pradesh] and Bihar and said whatever one might say these states alone could be pillars of strength for the party. He said real reasons for poor performance of the Congress in Bihar about which he knew a good deal as he was earlier in charge of this state were not lack of peoples' support. He knew ailments would spell out his programme for rejuvenating the Congress in both the states shortly.

Following the assassination of Mr Rajiv Gandhi, the future seemed bleak for the party. It was to the credit of all Congressmen that the party had overcome such a serious setback. "Of course Mr Rajiv Gandhi is not amidst us. His sudden removal had caused a vacuum. But thanks to the inner strength and resilience of the party, Congressmen had come out of this test of their strength remarkably well," Mr Rao added.

Mr Rao called upon the partymen never to lose faith in the Congress ideals, whatever calamity might befall them. The party had always emerged stronger from crisis. He said the purpose of the AICC session was to ascertain the views of party workers living in flung areas. He expressed the hope that delegates assembled for the session would not hesitate in candidly expressing their thoughts and problems facing the country while speaking on political, economic, foreign affairs, and panchayati raj resolutions.

Referring to his recent U.S. visit, the Prime Minister said misguided opposition had raised the bogey that he was going to Washington to change the country's policy. No Prime Minister could do such a thing. The country's policy was not so fragile or flexible as to change under pressure. It had evolved over the years from certain basic things which could never be alienated or ignored.

There was much unjustified talk that the Congress was resorting to the policy of expediency, the Prime Minister said. But it was not true. "We could rethink our ideology and introduce changes if necessary. But there should be no question of ad hocism or changing decisions only to suit certain situations," he added.

The political resolution asked the government to crush all terrorist activity.

It said political process be started in Kashmir and "responsible" administration given to the people there.

The resolution demanded speedy completion of the work relating to the investigation and uncovering of the forces responsible for the assassination of Mr Rajiv Gandhi.

The Kerala chief minister, Mr K. Karunakaran, moved the political resolution and the Punjab chief minister, Mr Beant Singh, seconded it.

Mr Karunakaran hailed the defeat of the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] in three of the four formerly BJP-ruled states last year and said the people had demonstrated their abhorrence to communalism.

Mr Beant Singh's emphasis was on preserving and sustaining the gains achieved against the militants and Pakistan's agents in the last three years or so. In this connection, he stressed the need for co-ordination of the security requirements in Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr Priya Ranjan Das Munshi, former Union minister, said that the party should do some heart-searching or else "many Kanshirams would be born".

The AICC congratulated the government for establishing a human rights commission as promised in the party's 1991 Lok Sabha election manifesto. The protection and preservation of human rights is an integral part of India's ancient tradition.

While Ms Sheila Dixit and Mr K. Natwar Singh attended the opening ceremony, Mr M. L. Fotedar and Mr K. N. Singh preferred to stay away.

Ms Dixit and Mr Natwar Singh said they felt happy to be present at the session.

11 Jun Session

94AS0351B Bombay *THE SUNDAY TIMES OF INDIA*
in English 12 Jun 94 pp 1, 24

[Text] The Times of India News Service, New Delhi, June 11—The Prime Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, said here today India would like to retain the option of making a nuclear bomb so long as there was no international agreement binding on all nations regarding these weapons, but there was no question of taking a decision for or against the bomb under threat or provocation from any quarter.

While speaking at the concluding function of the All-India Congress Committee (AICC) session, the Prime Minister said although the demand for the country going nuclear had been made from time to time, it was not easy to take a decision in view of the enormous destructive potential of these weapons.

As opinion all over the world was against the use of nuclear weapons, India would have to weigh all the pros and cons if a decision was taken for the bomb. In any case, such momentous decisions could not be taken without a thorough examination of all the options and their implications.

India's policy in this regard would be on the guidelines indicated by Jawaharlal Nehru when the nuclear question was first raised.

The Prime Minister ridiculed the demand for India going nuclear by the Bharatiya Janata Party at its conclave in Baroda. He said on such issues no responsible party should play the game of one-upmanship only to mislead the people. "This is not the right way of playing politics or exciting passions on issues which had serious implications. What if tomorrow the world arrives at an agreement leading to a total disarmament. Where would India then stand if it made the bomb?" Mr Rao asked.

Dealing with party matters, Mr Rao said each Congress member should contribute at least one per cent of his or her salary to the party. A resolution to this effect was passed at the Tirupati plenary session of the party, but had remained unimplemented. In view of the fact that the party had to prepare for the coming assembly elections, the question of raising resources should occupy the attention of all members. Any information about one's income disclosed through contribution for the Congress kitty would be confidential and not disclosed to the income tax department.

When Mr Rao was urging the AICC delegates to voluntarily make one per cent income contributions for the party, a member from visitor's gallery shouted that this should start from the "dais". But generally, the suggestion was welcomed by most of the delegates as was clear from the applause Mr Rao received when he made this proposal.

The party president also underlined the need for strengthening the Congress organisation down to the grassroots level through the panchayati raj system. He said legislative enactments had already been passed for panchayati raj by all the states. Shortly, panchayat elections would be held and the Congress should be fully prepared for these electoral battles. If the party could ensure strong pressure in panchayats, it would gain tremendously. "I won't mind if PCC [Pradesh Congress Committee] or DCC [District Congress Committee] presidents are there or not, but I would be very happy if increasing number of panchayats were headed by Congressmen. This would make even senior party leaders undertake visits to villages, something which seldom happens now," Mr Rao said.

Mr Rao said the world today was faced with a dilemma of big versus small industry. Big industries tempted people to leave villages and settle in towns. While the quality of goods produced by massive industries was good and its prices cheap, it entailed enormous costs of housing, transport, health and other factors. Small units on the other hand proved non-viable. But keeping in view resource constraint and other problems, India should strive for small things while painstakingly ensuring that their quality of production was maintained.

The AICC resolution categorically told Pakistan that India would never allow its territorial integrity to be trifled with.

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Nor would India ever become a party to any arrangement which leads to the separation of Jammu and Kashmir from the rest of the country.

"We appeal to Pakistan to stop aiding and abetting terrorists and to desist from fuelling arms race in the sub-continent and to join us in a meaningful dialogue within the framework of the Shimla agreement," the AICC asserted in its resolution on international affairs which was moved by the human resources development minister, Mr Arjun Singh, at the AICC session here today. The minister for personnel, Ms Margaret Alva, seconded the resolution.

The resolution says that Ms Indira Gandhi had signed the Shimla agreement to provide for a practical framework for resolving the problems between the two countries. The framework was still very relevant and it will be in the larger interest of peace in the region if an honest effort was made by Pakistan to settle bilateral differences within this framework.

The resolution traces the origin of the foreign policy since independence with fullsome praise for Mr Rajiv Gandhi's visit to China in 1988. However, its main focus is on India's relations with the United States and Pakistan. As for the U.S., it refers to the recent visit of the Prime Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, to that country and expresses optimism about his forthcoming visit to Russia. The resolution was carried through after incorporating some amendments. A forceful plea was made by most of the speakers on the resolution on international affairs for "democratisation of the U.N. and giving representation to India in the security council."

Prominent among those who spoke on this included the minister of state for external affairs, Mr R. L. Bhatia, the former minister of state for external affairs, Mr Natwar Singh, and the minister for personnel, Ms Margaret Alva. Mr Natwar Singh, who attended as a special invitee as he was suspended from the active membership after the Surajkund session, was asked by the Prime Minister to speak on the resolution.

Mr Bhatia said it was strange that "five countries with veto power are ruling the world." India was the largest democracy in the world and it should get its rightful place in the security council.

He said that Pakistan was hell bent upon internationalising the Kashmir issue and was not interested in finding a solution to it. India's relations with Pakistan could not improve as long as it supported terrorism in Kashmir. He said India's relations with China had improved with the Prime Minister signing an agreement to maintain peace and tranquility along the border.

Mr Natwar Singh called for the revision of the UN charter, inclusion of India in the security council and withdrawal of veto power from the permanent members.

Uttar Pradesh, Bihar Problems

94AS0351C Calcutta THE STATESMAN
in English 13 Jun 94 p 5

[Unattributed article: "Rao for Strong Action To Revamp Party in Hindi Heartland"—first paragraph is THE STATESMAN introduction]

[Text] The dissidence that has been brewing against the present leaders of the two States came out in the open when many AICC(I) [All India Congress Committee-I] delegates demanded removal of the PCC(I) Pradesh Congress Committee-I] presidents.

New Delhi, June 12—The Congress(I) president, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, today assured "ruthless action" to revamp the party organization in the Hindi heartland of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, even as several All India Congress(I) Committee members demanded withdrawal of the party's support to the Samajwadi Party-Bahujan Samaj Party [S.P.-BSP] Government in U.P. [Uttar Pradesh].

The delegates from Bihar and U.P. were the most visible lot during the two-day AICC(I) session which concluded yesterday here.

Many members from these States demanded action by the High Command to prevent the party from being decimated in the Hindi-belt.

Mr Rao devoted 90 minutes each to the delegates from these two States today and discussed the possibility of an action plan to revamp the party.

The dissidence that has been brewing against the present leaders of these two States came out in the open during the meetings, when many AICC(I) delegates demanded immediate removal of the PCC(I) presidents.

However, Mr Rao, in his characteristic style, did not come out with a positive response but said the revamp will be done after consulting individuals as well as groups.

The party president also said that he would take his decisions without going by anyone's personality.

Many of the delegates from U.P. questioned the central leadership's decision to support the S.P.-BSP combine in the State and said that the "casteist bias" of the present U.P. Government was systematically eroding the base of the Congress in the State.

At the same time, these delegates pointed out that when the AICC(I) has given a call to take up the challenge against the "casteist and anti-Gandhian forces", the Congress(I) should not continue to support the Mulayam Singh Government.

However, some delegates argued that this was not the right time to withdraw support to the S.P.-BSP Government, as that would lead to consolidation of the communalists and strengthen the Bharatiya Janata Party.

Sources said that Mr Rao asked Congressmen to act unitedly instead of levelling charges against one another.

Several suggestions on how to revamp the party in the State was made by the delegates, which included removal of the State leadership to infuse fresh blood in the party setup.

The main wrath of the dissidents seemed to be against the PCC(I) president, Mr Hidayatulla Khan, and the former Chief Minister, Dr Jagannath Mishra.

According to the pro-changers, Mr Khan was responsible for the complete ineffectiveness of the party.

They said that Dr Mishra was acting in an irresponsible manner by having good relations with the Laloo Prasad Yadav Government.

The meeting was attended, among others, by three Union Ministers, including Mr Ram Lakhan Singh Yadav, Ms Krishna Shahi and Mr Rameswar Thakur, the AICC(I) general secretary in charge of Bihar, Mr Sushil Kumar Shinde, Dr Jagannath Mishra and the PCC(I) chief Mr Hidayatullah [as published] Khan.

PTI [Press Trust of India] and UNI [United News of India] add: The Bihar Congress(I) is in the grip of a crisis following the removal of Mr Vijay Shankar Mishra, Member of Legislative Council, from the PCC(I) general secretary's post and action against four other leaders for their alleged anti-party activities following the defeat of the party candidate in the Vaishali by-elections.

Bharatiya Janata National Executive Meets

94IS03414 *Hyderabad DECCAN CHRONICLE*
in English 10 Jun 94 pp 1, 5

[Quotation marks as published]

[Text] Baroda, June 9 (UNI [United News of India])—The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has expressed "shock and resentment" over the pro-Pakistan tilt in the United States policy towards the Indian sub-continent despite the end of the cold war.

In a strongly-worded resolution adopted at the two-day national executive, the party said the hopes of ushering in an era of world peace, cooperation and all-round development with the end of the cold war had been belied. There was conflict and tension in many parts of the world, it said.

"The political and economic domination sought by some affluent countries, remind us of the colonial and imperialist era prevalent before the World War II," the four-page resolution said without naming the United States.

Releasing the resolution at a press conference on Thursday, the leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha, Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee, charged the Clinton administration with "turning a blind eye" towards Pakistan's officially instigated and aided terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir. This was in contrast to the Bush administration which made an effort to correct this tilt with the indication that the United States was getting ready to put Pakistan on its watch list of promoters of terrorism.

Similarly, Mr Vajpayee said the Clinton administration was "preparing to award" Pakistan for its development of nuclear weapons of which the US intelligence agencies were fully aware, by supplying dozens of F-16s which, with some modification, could bombard large parts of India. At the same time it (the United States) threatens India with dire consequences if it continues to retain its nuclear options and proceeds with the development of the Agni missile and the deployment of the Prithvi missiles," Mr Vajpayee added.

No wonder Pakistan feels it can come to no harm by continuing to aid and abet terrorists in Jammu and Kashmir. At the same time, despite its dismal performance in Geneva during the annual session of the UN Human Rights Commission earlier this year, Pakistan had not abandoned its efforts to internationalise the Kashmir question in the guise of protection of the human rights of the people of Kashmir.

There were credible reports to suggest that Pakistan would once again attempt in the UN General Assembly to pass an anti-India resolution. The reports also suggest that Pakistan would attempt to debate the question in the UN Security Council before the end of the year. Thus the instigator of terrorism, Pakistan, would attempt to put the victim, India, in the dock in various international fora, Mr Vajpayee said.

Seen against this background, the visit of the Prime Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, cannot but be termed a failure. The temporary improvement in the atmosphere cannot hide the fact that he was unable to obtain President Clinton's understanding on any of the issues which affect India's sovereignty, security and territorial integrity, the party said.

"The US administration still does not comprehend that it was no use pointing a finger at India regarding alleged violation of human rights in Kashmir as long as Pakistan perpetrates terrorism in the valley and elsewhere in J and K [Jammu and Kashmir]. Indeed, Mr Clinton had absolved the Government of Pakistan by saying that whatever assistance was now going to the terrorists operating in Kashmir was from private sources." "The United States still does not accept that the proliferation of nuclear weapons and systems of their delivery cannot be tackled except through global non-discriminatory regimes, that India cannot give up its nuclear option as long as there were nuclear weapons in the possession of even a single another country, that India cannot give up the development of an indigenous missiles system as long as a single another country possess such missiles," the resolution said.

"Similarly, the Government of India has been unable to convince Pakistan that there was a limit to India's patience," the resolution said. "Half a decade of Pakistani terrorism perpetrated in Kashmir should be enough to convince the Government of India that it cannot continue to shirk its responsibility to the country. If Pakistan does not end its aid to the terrorists soon, India would have to

decide on what steps to take against Pakistan to curb its nefarious activities in Jammu and Kashmir."

"The national executive of the BJP is proud of the leadership provided by Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee to the Indian delegation to the annual session of the UN Human Rights Commission in February-March this year. His wisdom and statesmanship gave an immense boost to the efforts of the Indian delegation to defeat the evil designs of Pakistan to malign and denigrate India," the party resolution said.

"Preparations were on to establish the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to replace the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade [GATT]. Even before it was established the United States and many countries of the European Union wanted to lead the WTC [expansion not given] Charter with environmental and social clauses detrimental to India and other developing countries. There is a talk of 'fair' trade which is a euphemism for 'managed' trade.

BJP National Council Meet

Criticism of Government

94AS03524 Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English
11 Jun 94 p 13

[Article by Anil Saxena: "Hindutva Our Mission: BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party)"; names as published]

[Text] The Times of India News Service, Baroda, June 10—Apart from mounting an attack on the three-year performance of the Rao government, making loud announcement that "Hindutva" has now become its mission and taking consolation from the fact that the Congress has virtually disappeared from Uttar Pradesh, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), at the start of its national council meeting here today, conveniently avoided any mention of the results of its own activities during this period.

The debacle of the BJP in the assembly elections and the not-very-satisfactory performance during the recent by-elections weighed heavily on the partymen. Even the opening address of the party president, Mr L. K. Advani, could not inject the much needed enthusiasm in the over 2,000 delegates, who have gathered here for the three-day conclave.

Mr Advani told the national council that the three years of "Rao raj" have been the most amoral in recent times. India has by now become quite familiar with corruption and nepotism, crime and violence and the late, Mr Jai-prakash Narayan would have described it as "the Gangotri itself becoming polluted."

Mr Advani said the moral rot began in Nandyal. The managers of the Congress president's poll campaign wanted their chief to enter the "Guinness Book of World Records." They do deserve full marks for trying. Mr Rao got just under 90 percent of the votes cast in Nandyal. The

managers stopped just below 90, obviously because when any candidate gets 90 percent or more in the poll, the election commission regards it as prima facie evidence of rigging. He said when these days the present government shouts from the housetops about electoral reforms, let no one forget Nandyal of November, 1991.

Criticising the government for engineering splits and defections, Mr Advani said that only one other thing matches the present government's zeal for defection and that is its zest for corruption. "Never in the history of independent India have so few looted so much from so many."

Mentioning the Bofors scandal, he said the recipients of the payoffs in the Bofors deal were amateurs compared to the scamstars of the Rao raj. The Bofors scandal may have cost the exchequer some Rs [Rupees] 60 to 100 crores, "but when we talk of the securities scam we are speaking of loot worth thousands of crores."

Mr Advani said the poll reform bill seeking to delink religion from politics was intended to target the BJP, which he claimed had become a formidable challenge for the ruling party. He said the two bills proposed to be discussed in parliament on Monday were not aimed at poll corruption, the real targets were firstly, the chief election commissioner, and secondly, the BJP.

On the Ayodhya issue, he said it was gratifying to note that even the opponents of the Ayodhya movement acknowledge that construction of a Ram temple at the Ram Janambhoomi has become inevitable. No one talks any more about reconstructing the "Babri Masjid". In the past few months, the only aspect of this issue which the opponents talk about is that the temple should be constructed by a government trust and not by the Ram Janambhoomi nyas. He said the people would not allow this to happen.

The BJP president said the economy continues to deteriorate and the common man in the country was worried about jobs and prices which the ruling party had failed to ensure. He said it was liberalisation and not globalisation which was needed to put the economy back on the rails.

Mr Advani criticised the congress for supporting the BSP-SP [Bahujan Samaj Party-Samajwadi Party] coalition in U.P. [Uttar Pradesh], when leaders of these parties attack Gandhiji and denigrate him as a vile casteist. He said it is not just political adventurism, but they are doing so with a definite design.

Mr Advani reminded the delegates that Hindutva was not merely an electoral plank, it was the BJP's mission. He called upon the delegates to rededicate themselves to the fulfillment of this mission as that alone could restore to Indian politics the moral and ethical base which had been progressively undermined by the proponents of casteist and communal votebank politics.

Political Resolution Summarized

94AS0352B Bombay THE SUNDAY TIMES OF INDIA in English 12 Jun 94 pp 1, 24

[Article by Anil Saxena: "BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party) Accuses Congress of Moral Drift"; names as published]

[Text] The Times of India News Service, Baroda, June 11—The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has while launching a tirade against the government, tried to project itself as a party with a difference, which believes in value-based politics and the propagation of cultural nationalism.

In its political resolution moved at the party's national council, it has called upon the people to beware of undemocratic threats, as posed by the proposed poll reform bills, and strengthen the BJP's ideological distinctiveness, its political, cultural and assertive nationalism.

The resolution further said the Rao government has exhibited a complete moral drift, surrendered the economic sovereignty of the country, shown weak-kneed approach in defending national security, undemocratic tendencies in seeking to constitutionally obstruct the BJP in the electoral arena on the pretext of electoral reforms and has mindlessly and disastrously pursued the politics of minorityism.

It said the ruling party and other pseudo-secular parties continue to pursue minorityism and Hindu-bashing as their version of secularism. The Prime Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao's announcement to set up a government trust to build a temple and mosque at Ayodhya was a move to deny to the nation a temple at the Ram Janmasthan.

The BJP sought the resignation of the Union food minister, Mr Kalpnath Rai and said the recent sugar muddle was a glaring example of the incompetence and the naked corruption of the Congress government in inflicting a misery on the people, wherein sugar was available at an unprecedented price of Rs 17 per kg. It charged that the sugar lobby and the Congress politicians have netted crores of rupees from this big scandal.

The government has failed to come with any steps to prevent the mass infiltration from Bangladesh, which besides being a burden on our economy, is also a threat to the national security, the resolution said. The situation in West Bengal and North Eastern states have become very precarious due to this menace.

Cautioning the people to beware of the "Shah Bano syndrome", the resolution said the Allahabad high court judgement, holding that oral talaq is unconstitutional, has revived the national debate on the need for a uniform civil code, which would ensure women equal rights and personal dignity. The fundamentalists have mounted a campaign against this historic verdict and have even challenged the basic constitutional tenets by establishing "Shariat courts".

The government, the resolution said, had institutionalised corruption as a way of life. The ghost of Bofors still haunts the Congress. The Gold-Star scandal, the allegation against the petroleum minister, Capt Satish Sharma, in relation to

foreign funds maintained by him, the scandals relating to the former petroleum minister, Mr B. Shankaranand, and the railway ministry under Mr C. K. Jaffer Sharief, the land scams of the Maharashtra chief minister, Mr Sharad Pawar, are only symptomatic of the moral debasement of the ruling party.

The resolution said the Congress had been making repeated efforts to create legal hurdles in the BJP's right to contest elections. The human resources minister, Mr Arjun Singh, had failed to get the BJP deregistered as a political party both before the election commission and the supreme court.

It said the two poll reform bills, now proposed to be introduced in parliament next week, aimed at debarring the BJP from the electoral arena and called upon the people to fight these anti-democratic legislations.

The resolution was moved by the former BJP chief minister of U.P. [Uttar Pradesh], Mr Kalyan Singh, who said the building of the Ram temple was inevitable and the BJP would wait for coming to power again in the state to fulfill its aim.

Speaking on the resolution the party vice-president, Mr Suraj Bhan, said the Congress was an enemy of the Dalits. He said only the BJP was in a position to improve their conditions.

In its economic resolution, the party also rejected Rao model of economic development and demanded that it be replaced with a "swadeshi" model based on Gandhiji's Ram rajya and Deen Dayal's integral humanism.

The resolution projected the failure of the government, and emphasises the importance of agriculture, irrigation and rural development as factors of growth in the Indian context. It also stresses upon the role of small scale sector, control over population growth through family welfare methods and development of human resources in all its aspects.

Akali Dal-Mann Removes Leader, Forms Presidium

94AS0358A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English 20 Jun 94 p 11

[Names as published]

[Text] Ludhiana, June 19—Mr Simranjit Singh Mann was yesterday removed from the presidentship of the Akali Dal (Mann) and a presidium of six members set up to run the party.

The action against Mr Mann was taken by a section of the Akali Dal (Mann) headed by Mr Harcharan Singh Rode, elder brother of Jarnail Singh Bhindranwale. Mr Amarjit Singh Chawla, a member of the presidium, said the step was taken as Mr Mann had joined the Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar) and united with Mr Surjit Singh Barnala and Capt Amarinder Singh without consulting the Damdami Taksal chief and senior Akali Dal(M) leaders.

Mr Chawla told reporters after the meeting that Mr Mann had not consulted the party before submitting to the Akal Takht and had thus "sabotaged" party unity. The two factions, Akali Dal (Baba Joginder Singh) and the Sikh Students Federation (Mehta), had joined the Akali Dal (Mann) under instructions from Baba Thakar Singh, acting chief of the Taksal.

The meeting strongly assailed Mr Mann for joining the Shiromani Akali Dal (Amritsar).

Papers Report Meeting of Jharkhand Mukti Morcha

Decisions, Plans Told

94AS0360A Calcutta *THE STATESMAN* in English
14 Jun 94 p 5

[Text] Ranchi, June 13—The fourth general conference of the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha [Jharkhand Liberation Front] (Soren) [JMM(S)], has served an ultimatum to the Centre, demanding a separate Jharkhand state by August 15, reports PTI [Press Trust of India].

The JMM(S) chief, Mr Shibu Soren, MP [member of Parliament], and his deputy, Mr Suraj Mandal, MP, said here today that the party would organize a "lok sansad" here on August 15 to declare a separate Jharkhand State if the Centre failed to do so.

Both the leaders were unanimously re-elected to their respective posts during the three-day conference, which concluded at Bokaro yesterday.

As part of the agitational programmes, 151 padayatras would be undertaken by the party leaders from August 1 next. These padayatras would originate from various points and reach here for the "lok sansad".

The party activists would be asked to mobilize mass support from July 1 for the purpose, Mr Mandal said.

A rally would also be held at the Shahid Minar in Calcutta on June 30 to observe the Jharkhand "Kranti Divas".

Briefing the reporters, Mr Mandal said that it was decided that the proposed Jharkhand Autonomous Council [JAC] offered by the Centre would be treated as a "stepping stone" for a separate Jharkhand state.

"We will fight for it in the Gandhian way," he said.

It was also decided that the JMM(S) would forge alliances with other like-minded parties except for the Janata Dal to fight for the cause.

The conference held the Bihar Chief Minister, Mr Laloo Prasad Yadav, responsible for blocking the constitution of the JAC and the tardy development in the tribal areas, besides unleashing violence in the State.

The party also accused the Prime Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao for not settling the Jharkhand imbroglio despite assurances of an "early solution".

Conference Failures Noted

94AS0360B Bombay *THE TIMES OF INDIA* in English
15 Jun 94 p 15

[Text] Bokaro, June 14—The Jharkhand Mukti Morcha [Jharkhand Liberation Front] (JMM) conference, held after five years, which concluded on Sunday, seems to have failed in developing further its stand on vital issues such as the future of the Jharkhand agitation, the strategy to be adopted and the problems of tribals and non-tribals.

The deliberations at the three-day conference were marked by lack of clear perception on burning issues. Anarchy prevailed in both the arrangements and the discussions at every session, revealing that the JMM is not organised sufficiently enough to sustain an agitation, but is merely a front with internally opposing forces. The participation of women in the conference was negligible in the past, women had participated in large numbers during agitations.

Discussions were held on the displacement of the local population, disparities in the living standards and the conflicts of the Jharkhand people during the conference. However, all this did not lead to the announcement of any new strategy. Local groups have been active for the displaced population of Bokaro, the Netarhat firing range, Koelkaro, Simlipal and other places, but the JMM has so far made no concrete attempts to interfere in these issues and give fresh impetus to these agitations.

A "Jharkhand Yatra", which to the common mass would appear to be like another padayatra, was announced at the conference. According to political observers, this is nothing but the start of the party's election campaign for the next assembly elections.

The leadership concentrated on the next assembly elections throughout the conference. From the discussions held on the general secretary's report, it became evident that the JMM leadership does not have any plans to take the demand of Jharkhand in a decisive stage. The greatest irony was the party's inability to clarify its stand in the context of its demand for Jharkhand state and their role in the assembly elections.

Never was the question raised, though it was the central issue for the conference.

A point of heated discussion was whether the central committee of JMM should have 125 members or 175! This discussion took place on the last day of the conference from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. Before this, a five-hour closed door meeting took place in the air-conditioned room of Bokaro Hotel. This meeting named the members of the new committees.

The JMM appears to be in mood to ally with Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav's Samajwadi Party to take on Mr Laloo Prasad Yadav. Mr Shibu Soren and Mr Suraj Mandal, the president and the vice-president of the JMM respectively, are said to be making efforts in this direction and have talked to Mr Mulayam Singh Yadav, several times.

Aerospace Laboratories Detail New Project*94AS0363A Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English
20 Jun 94 p 15*

[Text] Bangalore, June 19—The National Aerospace Laboratories (NAL) authorities said here today that papers for obtaining the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs' (CCEA) clearance of the Light Transport Aircraft (LTA) "Saras" had been prepared.

The Rs [Rupees] 87-crore "Saras" is the next major development project at NAL, being jointly undertaken with Myasishchev Design Bureau (MDB) of Russia. The Russian version of the aircraft has been named "Duet".

While two prototypes of the eight to 14-seater aircraft will be manufactured by the Russian Bureau, the third prototype will be fabricated by NAL.

A U.S.-based non-resident Indian (NRI) has evinced keen interest in becoming a partner in the Saras development programme and the interest is likely to include production of the aircraft too, NAL said.

Meanwhile, the first production version of the country's all composite light aircraft, "Hansa," indigenously developed by the NAL will take to the skies by April next year.

The production version, according to NAL, would have an improved aerodynamic design and a more powerful engine and would be fabricated using new process.

The fibre glass plastic aircraft made its maiden flight on November 17 last year with Wing Commander, P. Ashoka, an emeritus scientist of Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) piloting the aircraft for about 25 minutes.

At present, no such aircraft made out of fibre reinforced plastic is available indigenously in India.

Ideal for ab initio training, sport and hobby flying, "Hansa," weighing just 850 kg, is a twin-seater aircraft, that can be used for surveillance, aerial photography and environmental monitoring.

According to the NAL annual report for 1993-94, the experimental prototype had till March 31 this year logged in about 35 hours of extensively trouble free test flights and had since been cleared for its full flight envelope.

The maximum speed of "Hansa" was 15 knots with an endurance of four hours. The composite material used in the aircraft was rugged, rust proof and easy to maintain for flying training, and its cost effectiveness expected to match any aircraft of similar class in the world. The basic structure of Hansa is fabricated with moulds using a sandwich with PVC foam core and surfaces of glass and carbon fibres.

The aircraft would be commercially manufactured by the Taneja Aerospace and Aviation Limited (TAAL) at its plant in Hosur, about 40 km from Bangalore, after transfer of technology from NAL, and who had supported the development of the aircraft initially christened "Nalla".

The aircraft incorporating all the improved features is now getting ready at the TAAL factory.

NAL had during the year transferred three technologies developed by it to five industries for commercial exploitation.

For the first time, two computer software packages have been developed at NAL for analysis structures and graphic analysis package for aerodynamic data. Nalsun, the black chromium-plating process, was licensed to three more units taking the total number of licences issued for the process to nine.

The report said two more licences for this technology were at an advanced stage of finalisation.

In an effort to globalise the research and development activities of the laboratories, an agreement had been signed with a consultancy firm from the United States for marketing the process and composition for descaling of metallic components in North America. Negotiations were also on with an Indian export house for export of NAL technologies it said.

Among various projects now being implemented by NAL included a Rs.66 lakh programme for Department of Science and Technology for developing a 64 bit parallel processing computer, besides development of Digital Control Law for the Light Combat Aircraft for the Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) costing Rs 1.38 crores.

Rao Commissions Newly Built Submarine 'Shankul'**Report on Speech***94AS0344A Bombay THE SUNDAY TIMES OF INDIA
in English 29 May 94 p 1*

[Text] The Times of India News Service, Bombay, May 28—The Prime Minister, Mr P. V. Narasimha Rao, today commissioned the submarine, "INS Shankul", built by the Mazagaon Dock Ltd. (MDL) here.

Speaking on the occasion, he said India will not tolerate any effort to restrict its freedom to protect the nation's maritime interests.

He told a large gathering at Tiger Gate that India neither wishes to control the oceans around her nor deny others their legitimate use or equitable access to the seas either on the surface or below it.

"Over the last few years, the defence budget had to be cut because of our serious resource crunch. As a consequence, the naval budget had to be pruned," Mr Rao noted. Nevertheless, the need for a balanced fleet with ships, including aircraft carriers for air defence, submarines and maritime aircraft cannot be underestimated, he added.

Mr Rao said "INS Shankul" was the second diesel-electrical submarine being built in India and the fourth of the series with the Indian Navy. The first two having been

built in Germany, it was planned to construct four submarines at MDL. "This programme, however, had to be curtailed because of a resource crunch and other factors," he said.

The Prime Minister's speech was hardly audible because of poor acoustics. Present on the occasion were the Maharashtra governor, Dr. P. C. Alexander, the chief minister, Mr Sharad Pawar, and senior naval officials.

Rear Admiral's Misgivings

94AS0344B Calcutta THE SUNDAY STATESMAN
in English 29 May 94 p 6

[Text] Bombay, May 28—The Prime Minister commissioned India's second indigenously built submarine, Shankul, into the naval fleet in an official ceremony this afternoon. The pomp was somewhat dimmed, however, when Rear Admiral D. V. Taneja, the chief of the Mazagaon Docks Limited [MDL], where the boat was built, sounded a note of warning.

The MDL chief voiced the long-harboured apprehensions on the future of this modern ship-building yard. Two of the three ship-building units in MDL, the Rear Admiral said, would face inevitable closure if the company did not receive fresh orders soon.

He appealed to the Prime Minister to personally ensure that the Indian Navy and the Coast Guard continued to place orders with MDL. This, he said, would be the only way to "prevent the fading away of the painstaking efforts in developing the required infrastructure and skills".

Unlike most other submarines in India's fleet, the Shankul is not a "patrol" boat, but an anti-submarine class submarine. The boat was built by the Mazagaon Dock in association with the German firm, HDW [Howaldtswerke Deutsche Werft].

However, following the political scandal about kickbacks in the HDW deal, the MDL is now left with expensive infrastructure and considerable technological know-how, but no orders.

The Prime Minister, in his speech, assured Navy officials that Government funding for naval programmes had not been cut. He, however, did not depart from the text of his prepared speech to take note of Rear Admiral Taneja's request. He also did not respond to media questions on the country's missile programme and nuclear policy.

Kickbacks Scandal Fallout

94AS0344C Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English
28 May 94 p 6

[Article by Keith Flory: "Navy Sinks Under HDW (Howaldtswerke Deutsche Werft) Kickbacks Scandal"]

[Text] New Delhi, May 27—The commissioning of a naval vessel is always a poignant affair. There will be moist eyes in Bombay tomorrow when Shankul, India's second indigenously produced submarine, acquires the hallowed INS prefix and joins the fleet.

But, alas, the absence of any follow-up construction programme will also cause tears of sorrow. Which will run silent, run deep.

Shankul's final farewell to the Mazagaon Docks will signify not just the end of a project in association with the West German firm, HDW [Howaldtswerke Deutsche Werft].

It will also become a classic example of how a limited construction programme results in crores of rupees and hard-earned technological expertise being wasted.

The HDW programme involved more than just the acquisition of submarines. The deal contained the transfer of the entire range of technologies that went into the designing and building of such boats.

But the gains of what several experts described as an "excellent arrangement" have been allowed to die. Simply because of the political fallout of the kickbacks scandal in the second phase of the deal.

The original arrangement with HDW, finalized in 1981, was for the outright purchase of two of its Type 1500 boats that would be built in Germany.

It also included the transfer of technology for constructing two boats at Mazagaon Docks in Bombay, with the "option" of another two boats.

The kickbacks, or commissions, were said to relate to exercising the option for the fifth and sixth boats. Once the politicians got into the act, however, the entire deal came under a cloud.

Echoed in India was the furore unleashed by the Greens Party in Germany over the sale of the Type 1500 design to then apartheid-ridden South Africa in violation of German law.

The protests continued, although India had never purchased the design from HDW, and, indeed, had no exclusive rights to it.

By refusing the option on the last two boats India suffered on two counts. The vast capital expenditure incurred on setting up the construction facilities at the shipyard proved almost wasteful.

Such expenses, financial experts said, could not be justified through a programme that involved the building of only two boats. The constructing of four boats, they said, would be the minimum requirement for cost-effectiveness.

However, since Government money is "nobody's money", political factors took paramount priority.

And even after the political complexion of the Government changed, it was considered wise not to reverse the position. The construction facilities, therefore, have been lying idle for some years.

The loss is even greater in terms of human skills—the true technology transfer.

When the Government decided to curtail its association with HDW, it should have set about finalizing the construction programme of boats of a different design, Defence experts said.

The Navy is not alone in suffering from the fallout of "scandals". The Army suffered with Bofors. But that, of course, is a different story.

IRAN

U.S. Accused of Plot To Dominate Persian Gulf

94LA0198A Tehran KEYHAN in Persian

13 Jun 94 pp 1, 18

[Text] Abu Dhabi—UAE, (IRNA)—In a note to the member nations of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC], America has outlined Washington's policy for future political, economic, technical, and commercial cooperation with these countries.

Yesterday the Abu Dhabi media wrote: In this note, which is called "A White Paper on America's Future Cooperation With Member Nations of the Gulf Cooperation Council," cancellation of economic boycotts against the Zionist regime is emphasized.

In its meeting of last week chaired by Shaykh Sultan Bin-Zayid Al Nuwayyan, this nation's deputy prime minister, the UAE [United Arab Emirates] Council of Ministers studied America's white paper.

The UAE and the five nations of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia are GCC members.

Based on this paper, America believes that the economic boycott against the regime occupying Jerusalem by the Arab nations is the most important obstacle to the development as much as possible of America's exports to the member nations of the GCC.

In this paper America has also asked GCC member nations to adhere to and carry out the New York International Arbitration Treaty on issues of commerce, law, and regulations pertaining to the protection of personal property, innovation, invention, commercial announcements and standards, the right to publish and write, and confidential commercial regulations between the two sides.

In this white paper the White House also regards the regulations on exports and imports in the GCC nations as an obstacle to the development of exports from American companies to these countries and it calls for the removal of restrictions and the provision of more facilities in return for the sale of weapons to these nations.

America also asked the GCC to establish uniform tariffs and customs levies on American exports to member nations.

In 1993 the volume of America's exports to the GCC member nations was more than \$12 billion.

In this white paper, Washington also asked the GCC member nations to provide Americans with special concessions and facilities at commercial hotels, institutions, and commercial companies.

In the same regard the UAE, in the framework of a bilateral agreement with America, gave special facilities and services to Americans and issued American citizens 10-year certificates of permanent residency.

In its request paper, America also discussed the subject of future cooperation from American companies on projects to develop the oil and gas industries of the GCC member nations, and it called for the sale of American machinery and industrial parts to these countries, as well as its own participation in their petrochemical industry projects.

America's white paper states that Oman and the UAE are two important centers for investment in agricultural industries and it that expects Bahrain to be an investment base in the project to develop aluminum industries.

Based on this publication, all the GCC member nations are considered to be important and new markets for the marketing and sale of security, safety, and defense equipment and also for American consumer goods such as vehicles, household goods, cloth, clothing, carpets, rugs, and decorative supplies.

In this white paper, Washington also speaks of the necessity to send American technical experts to cooperate in the industrial and service sectors of the GCC member nations, such as repair and maintenance, engineering, building architecture, insurance, communications, health care and treatment.

Other things discussed in this paper include the sending of American experts to the GCC member nations to cooperate in the area of the knowledge and information delivery and educational matters.

Pilgrim Deaths Attributed to Saudi Incompetence

94LA0197A Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 16 Jun 94 p 16

[Article by Seyyed Yusef Sharifi; KEYHAN's mobile correspondent to the pilgrimage]

[Text] Note: The disaster at Mina during this year's Haj rites was a bitter and sad event that was seen as a painful calamity by the world's Islamic groups. KEYHAN's mobile correspondent has prepared the following report on this subject and on other matters concerning Saudi incompetence conducting the Haj rites.

The memory of the mass deaths in the Mina tunnel in the year 1367 [21 March 1988-20 March 1989] was still in the minds of the world's Muslims this year when incompetence and lack of planning and management of vehicle and pedestrian traffic this year caused hundreds of innocent and oppressed pilgrims to lose their lives or suffer injury and harm due to overcrowding and crowd pressure.

Similar accidents have also occurred at Mina during the Haj rites of previous years. Crowding and disorder as

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pilgrims went to throw rocks at the stone pillars representing Satan have caused the deaths of tens of women and men pilgrims. This year this disorder reached a peak in every respect due to Saudi incompetence in managing affairs having to do with the Mina rites during the three days following the Feast of the Sacrifice. Along with this disorder and crowding, the pollution and the pitiful hygiene turned this sacred site into a garbage dump. The streets and passages leading to and from the pillars, the floors of the tunnels and the bridge surfaces traveled on by the pilgrims were piled with trash and garbage so that the pilgrims walked on piles of trash and garbage, and sometimes they fell down when they stepped on water bottles. Piled on the roads was everything from containers for beverages, canned food, ice cream and water bottles and various food containers to cigarette wrappers, nylon stockings and slippers, paper, empty food containers and anything you can think of.

Not only did municipal officials fail to collect this garbage and trash along the roads and among the tents, but also garbage bags full of trash were piled up at the entrances to tents and in the pilgrim residential sites throughout the three days and nothing was done to haul them. If it is possible to keep Mina clean and collect its garbage, no matter how great the volume, during the three days of pilgrim mobilization, it is necessary to employ a sense of responsibility, management, and expertise in carrying out the task. Yet it is possible to keep Mina clean and collect the garbage there using simple-hand implements, and with the resources the Saudi officials have, it would be possible to keep the thoroughfares orderly and clean by installing and using conveyor belts running down the middle of every street.

No matter how much I say about the filth and lack of public hygiene at Mina, it is not enough. When the Saudi heat and hot sun on the polluted ground are combined with a mild breeze, the disgusting stench is magnified. To escape the stench and prevent infection by various diseases, a number of pilgrims covered their faces with masks or handkerchiefs, and most of them were sharply critical of the Mina situation in terms of the pollution and the lack of cleanliness and public hygiene.

Talks With Pilgrims of Various Countries

A Malaysian pilgrim and literature student who had brought his ailing father to a temporary emergency facility at Mina severely criticized the failure to observe hygiene and cleanliness, especially at Mina, which caused his father and a number of his traveling companions to become ill. He said: The measures taken by the Saudis to preserve the health and hygiene of pilgrims are quite limited and ineffective. While the Saudis have had a year to plan for the three-day mobilization of the pilgrims to Mina, unfortunately their arrangements for this important matter have been weak and defective, and these arrangements are in no way adequate for such a large international Islamic gathering. He believed that the main reason for the increase in the number of illnesses and deaths among Malaysian pilgrims is the lack of hygiene and a healthy environment for this great gathering.

A Pakistani pilgrim criticized the filthy and polluted situation at Mina, and he considered the main reason for it to be the incompetence of the hygiene and sanitation officials at Mina. He said: This situation absolutely cannot be justified from the perspective of being a Muslim. He said: If the slogan of Muslims is that "cleanliness comes from the faith," then some of this should be demonstrated by what we do about sanitation and hygiene at this great Islamic gathering, especially in the House of God, yet at Mina, Mount Arafat and the Sacred Grove Mosque, we have seen the opposite of this slogan.

An Iranian pilgrim from Birjand criticized the municipality and the sanitation officials at Mina and he described the hygiene situation at Mina in the three days following the Feast of the Sacrifice as very bad. He said: During the three days of pilgrim mobilization the sanitation officials did not even haul the collected and bagged garbage in front of the entrances to the caravans and along the roadsides until the last day.

He said: Worst of all is the pitiful situation at the Mina slaughter area, which made a number of people nauseous as soon as they entered. The ground in the slaughter area was covered with blood and filth. The pilgrims who were obliged to go into the slaughter area to make their sacrifices had to step through a layer of filth and mud, and they were definitely splattered to the knees with blood and filth. Of course, there are many things to say concerning the procedure for carrying out the sacrifice at Mina and its outcome, and God willing we will say those things in the appropriate place.

At the Sacred Grove Mosque and Mount Arafat the lack of hygiene and the lack of related resources were completely obvious. The shortage of toilets and water faucets forced the pilgrims to stand in queues of 200 to 300 persons. In the morning when we left the Sacred Grove the trash, filth, and sewage were still there, covering that sacred valley, and instead of a desert breeze there was an unpleasant odor.

Incompetence of Saudi Officials

The Saudis claim that they have spent more than \$7 billion to build installations and facilities for the welfare of the pilgrims to the House of God, of which almost \$300 million was spent at Mina and Arafat alone. Of course, the amount spent is a large and significant figure, and Mina now also has sufficient resources for the three-day mobilization of the pilgrims, but it is the lack of management and the incompetence of the Saudi agents and officials in charge that are inadequate to establish order and make the proper arrangements for the movement of the pilgrims to the stoning pillars, and it is this inability and lack of management that have caused the bloody disasters such as this year's incident and those of previous years at Mina, taking the lives of hundreds of pilgrims to the House of God.

Every time a number of servants of God and innocent pilgrims to the House of God lose their lives, the Saudi officials, who call themselves "servants of the shrines," merely express regret and offer condolences, without learning a lesson from it and setting out to find a solution

and the real reason and seeking to prevent the repetition of other such incidents in future years. Then the next year another disaster takes the lives of more people!

270 Killed Because of the Escort

This year at the Mina rites 270 pilgrims were killed at the upper levels of the stoning area because of the escort by Saudi agents. Tens of other people lost their lives because of the crushing and crowding along the stoning route, just as last year during the Haj rites 1,400 people also lost their lives at Mina. During the last year shouldn't the officials in charge of managing the Mina rites have thought of a way to prevent the incidents of the past at Mina?

A Turkish pilgrim said: The Saudi agents deliberately permitted buses and vehicles to go into the midst of a crowd of pedestrians, causing road blocks and crowding and crushing the crowd together. Sometimes this caused old and weak men and women to be injured and trampled underfoot. The crowding prevented vehicle movement, and the vehicles prevented the pedestrians from moving. Consequently, the people in the vehicles dismounted more often and the people riding the buses reached their destinations later than the people walking. The Saudi agents made this aggravating move mostly because of bribes from the drivers!

It is natural that every year the number of pilgrims to the House of God will be greater. This year also the number of visitors was greater than the previous year. No matter how great the crowding, however, if there is order and arrangement of traffic, it will not cause the loss of life.

The main cause of the killing of tens of pilgrims along the stoning route is the disorder and the lack of management in creating order and making arrangements for pedestrian and vehicle traffic. Arranging the traffic of pilgrims towards the stoning area is so simple and easy that it could be done by any nonspecialist. The first step is that along the route to the stoning area "to" and "from" paths should be designated and specified for pedestrians, and pedestrians must be required to use those two routes. Another separate route should be designated for the coming and going of vehicles, and vehicles should be completely prohibited from using any route other than the one designated.

Better Relations With Qatar Detailed

94LA0208B Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I
in Persian 22 Jun 94 p 10

[Text] Bushehr, 22 Khordad [13 June] (IRNA)—The deputy minister of economy, commerce and trade of Qatar announced the readiness of his country to import Iranian goods.

Yusuf Hoseyn Kamal made this statement in the session of the owners of Bushehr industries and merchants.

He termed the relationship of his country with the Islamic Republic brotherly and added: These relations have become more sincere and stronger since the exchanges of the officials of the two countries.

Referring to the facilities that the government of Qatar has in mind for the traffic of Iranian citizens to that country, he said: These facilities are different for other foreign nationals, but Iranians can receive their visas within 48 hours by going to travel agencies.

Concerning customs duties on Iranian goods, Hoseyn Kamal said: At the present, Iranian fruits and vegetables which enter Qatar through the province of Bushehr are exempt from customs and in regards to other goods, it is 4 percent, which compared to the duties in other Persian Gulf countries is insignificant.

He also announced the readiness of Qatar merchants to purchase Iranian goods and at the present time explained that Iran is a center for the export of Qatar goods to the newly independent Central Asian countries. In this session, the governor general of Bushehr considered the sincere relationship and good neighborliness between the two countries as stemming from Islam and emphasized the necessity of their expansion in all areas as much as possible.

Nadimi-Bushehri considered the good relations between the Islamic Republic and Qatar a model for other Persian Gulf countries.

The deputy minister of economy, commerce and trade of Qatar and his companion visited general industrial production units in the suburbs of Borazjan, the port facilities of Bushehr, the Industrial and Sea Company of Sadra, and the Bushehr Fishery Research Center.

Travelers Abroad Allowed \$1,000 Foreign Currency

94LA0208C Tehran KEYHAN-E HAVA'I
in Persian 22 Jun 94 p 10

[Text] Tehran, 25 Khordad [15 June]—The amount of foreign currency for every traveler was announced by the Central Bank of Iran at \$1,000 on the basis of a circular letter.

According to a report by KEYHAN, in a letter the director general of the Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran asked the director general of customs of the country to rapidly announce to all customs of the country that the amount of foreign currency to be taken out by every traveler will be no more than \$1,000.

The text of this letter is as follows:

Following the circular letter dated 14/01/1373 [3 April 1994], please instruct all the customs rapidly: From this date on, the holder of every passport is permitted to carry a maximum of the equivalent of \$1,000 in cash, bank or travelers checks, or a combination of these, and if it is a collective passport, for every companion, he may also take out of the country \$500. Also, taking foreign currency over the above-mentioned ceiling is possible with the written permission of this bank to the banking network of the country and having the amount written in the passport by the related bank. Obviously, foreign currency stated in

foreign currency statement forms or passports of passengers at the entry points will be allowed to be taken out.

On the other hand, Mohammad Hoseyn 'Adeli, the director general of the Central Bank, announced in an interview: Until the new rate is established, travelers foreign currency will not be given to individuals who leave the country.

Bandar 'Abbas Oil Refinery's Construction Report

94LA0199A Tehran KEYHAN in Persian 13 Jun 94 p 13

[Article by Omid Mas'udi: "A Look at the Refinery Under Construction at Bandar 'Abbas"]

[Text] More than 10,000 capable Iranian workers are working with doubled love and devotion in unbearable sweltering heat to build and install one of the world's largest refineries under construction.

The nation's eighth refinery is being built on a 700-hectare [ha] site near the village of Jamal Ahmad in the district of Gachin, 6 km from the coast and about 30 km west of the city of Bandar 'Abbas and to the northeast of Bandar-e Shahid Raja'i. Two years ago this place was nothing but dry, burning desert with no plant cover, and now it is on its way to becoming one of the industrial cities in the south of the country.

This project is important simply because if it goes into operation and if the people economize a little on the consumption of domestic oil, it will be possible to export its surplus production.

The eighth refinery has so far cost \$940 million in foreign exchange and 24 billion tumans. According to estimates that have been made, this refinery will be able to produce \$4.5 million per day in products. The refinery's added value after deducting all its current expenses, investments, and amortization will be more than \$400 million per year. With this calculation, one can hope to see the return of the investments and costs within three to four years.

Engineer Hariri, executive director of the National Engineering and Construction Company, told a gathering of news correspondents who had come to Bandar 'Abbas to see the refinery: It is a matter of great pride for Iranian engineers that after starting up the oil-making unit at the Esfahan refinery and after starting up the Arak refinery, they are now working in Bandar 'Abbas to start up the great installations of the most modern refinery under construction in the world, to achieve a state of nondependence in the oil industry.

The time is now past when foreigners in Abadan called the hard-working youth in the southern part of the country third-class citizens. They are now seeing how yesterday's third-class citizens are today building one of the nation's great projects to achieve independence and industrial self-sufficiency.

Hariri emphasized that one of the characteristics of the project to build the Bandar 'Abbas refinery is that maximum use is being made in every aspect of domestic

specialists, experts, and resources. We expect that this policy will save a total of about \$800 million in foreign exchange.

He noted: In the fundamental and detailed design and engineering sector of the refinery's units, the share of the Iranian engineering companies is about 400,000 man-hours. For construction of the refinery's equipment, maximum use has also been made of the resources of domestic factories. The general work on civil engineering, construction, and installation of the refineries storage facilities has so far been performed entirely and independently by capable Iranian forces and will soon be completed.

Engineer Ebrahim Zamanzadeh, executive officer for the Bandar 'Abbas refinery project, discussed the innovative work by Iranian engineers to raise the quality of the work and to save on the construction of this refinery. He said: In view of the climate of Bandar 'Abbas and in view of the fact that this area is considered one of the world's earthquake areas, maximum care must be taken with the refinery's great structures so we can complete the task while observing international standards and using the limited resources we have inside the country. Fortunately the contractors who are cooperating with us in the construction work, who are all Iranian, have themselves made some interesting innovations. For example, in the civil construction work they have converted "on-site concrete pouring" to "prefabricated concrete," which is effective both in advancing the work and in contributing significantly to expediting the task and making it more elegant and compatible with regional conditions.

Thus, while it was expected that by this time 40 percent of the civil construction would be completed, fortunately now 60 percent of the work has been done. In the work of installing the storage facilities we have again seen innovations by Iranian engineers, which must be seen first-hand.

Zamanzadeh said: In the construction of the eighth refinery, we ourselves are doing the construction and installation. Of course, some foreign companies are also cooperating with us, but the work is being done entirely with our design, supervision, and management.

At the end of this press conference, Engineer Hariri announced that the construction of the tar plant on the other side of the Caspian Sea and Turkmenistan's pipeline will soon bear fruit with the capable province of Iranian manpower [sentence as published].

Engineer Hariri discussed the importance of this refinery. He said: Currently, for every 100 barrels of crude oil that is sent out of the country to be refined, apart from the expense of shipping and refining, only 50 barrels of refined oil products come back to the country. We thus see what great wealth we lose every day. Yet if our good people were to economize a little on the consumption of oil in such a way that oil consumption did not increase as rapidly as it is doing now, we would be able to export a large amount of the products from the Bandar 'Abbas refinery and obtain good revenues for the country.

In terms of the quantity of its products, this refinery is already the largest in the world. That is, we know of no place in the world that has a refinery under construction that is this modern in its design. Of course there are several huge and modern refineries that have already been built, but no such refinery is being built concurrent with ours.

Hariri added: The price of oil products in the country is low and we have excessive consumption. If natural gas consumption replaces oil consumption, and as we have said, if the people also economize, some oil products will be exported.

Engineer Zamanzadeh discussed the shortage of water in the region. He said: While Bandar 'Abbas is on the coast of the Persian Gulf, it has a shortage of water. To provide water from the refinery we extract 40,000 cubic meters [m³] of water from the sea, and in view of the amount of water required to cool the equipment, the waste water is collected in ponds, repurified, and used to water the refinery's greenery.

Zamanzadeh said: In terms of environmental pollution and the refinery's proximity to the sea, an effort has been made to adhere fully to standards. It can be said that the engineers have tried to keep the refinery from having any pollution, or to keep its pollution to a minimum.

Concerning the work force, Engineer Hendiani, director of construction and construction supervision said that one of the goals of the project to build the eighth refinery at Bandar 'Abbas is to employ native manpower from the region. Of course unfortunately, because of the special conditions in the coastal and border province of Hormozegan and the existence of false occupations with windfall incomes, the province's youth and manpower show little interest in working at the refinery. Despite this we have hired a number of young high-school graduates who are undergoing journeyman and expert training to prepare for service at the refinery.

Hendiani said: Clearly, when the refinery goes into operation we will see striking change and transformation in the performance of economic tasks, and this will gradually have an effect reducing the false occupations.

Engineer Hariri discussed progress in the detailed design work and purchasing services. He said: In this sector about 87 percent of the work has been done, and 60 percent of the civil engineering and construction work has been done. In view of the fact that the installation work began several months ago, the project's total progress is about 50 percent.

In the area of the transfer of technology, through the maximum use of domestic resources the design and construction of a number of pressurized containers, towers and heat transfer units was assigned to domestic manufacturing plants by the Iran Industrial Projects Management Company, and Italian and Japanese specialists are continuing their direct cooperation and supervision with the aforementioned manufacturers' Iranian specialists.

The aforementioned orders, which include the design and construction of 145 towers and pressurized containers, 82

heat transfer units, one 120-ton steam pot and about 70,000 m³ of steel skeletons, complete the design stage and so far a number of the items have also been built.

Engineer Zamanzadeh discussed the refinery's raw materials. He said that the refinery will use 220,000 barrels of heavy export crude oil per day and 12,000 barrels per day of liquid gases extracted from the Sarkhun gas reserves, procured by ship and pipeline, respectively.

He added: This is the nation's first refinery to be designed to use Iran's heavy export crude oil. It uses the world's newest and best refining technology to achieve maximum extraction of medium distillation products.

With regard to this refinery's products and output, it is not bad if you know that the eighth refinery's products will include 7,100 barrels per day of liquid gas, 46,100 barrels per day of motor gasoline, 36,200 barrels per day of kerosene and jet fuel, 69,500 barrels per day of gasoil, 66,900 barrels per day of stove oil, 5,000 barrels per day of tar, and 124 tons per day of sulphur.

So far, to meet the expenses of building this refinery, we have borrowed \$50 million at one time and \$260 million at another time from Japan and also 480 million marks from European nations, and this will not be a significant figure compared to the \$800 million in foreign exchange that has been saved.

Engineer Hariri discussed the refinery's problems with rials and foreign exchange. He said: In view of the help from the Majles and the president of the republic, this year they have allocated \$209 in foreign exchange and about 30 billion rials to advance and complete the project. If these funds are received on time, by the end of next year [20 March 1996] we will see the plant go into operation.

Forty-five km away from the refinery to the northwest of Bandar 'Abbas, with the cooperation of the office of the deputy governor-general of Hormozegan for development, a 400-ha housing complex for the eighth refinery is being built. At this complex 2,867 housing units with 12 types, in addition to a sports complex and a commerce center along with other service and educational installations including training and study centers, a mosque, and a gasoline pump, are under construction. When the refinery highway is built the distance between the complex and the refinery will be about 15 km.

Thus, after the construction next year of the warehouses for the iron foundry company, the cement factory, the sea terminal for the Mobarakeh Steel Complex and the al-Mehdi Aluminum Complex, we will see the great Bandar 'Abbas refinery go into operation, all of whose economic and industrial projects will have been carried out in the province of Hormozegan, and this indicates a bright future for the people of our country. The efforts of those who have worked for this must be praised and appreciated.

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